CARAVAN KIDD

VOLUME 2

キャラバン・キッド

story and art
Johji Manabe

lettering and touch-up
Wayne Truman

translation
Dana Lewis
& Toren Smith

Dark Horse Comics®

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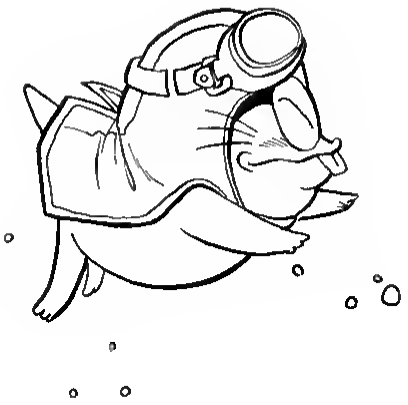

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Mike Richardson

series editors
Robert Boyd
& John Weeks

collection editor
Suzanne Taylor

collection designer
Corey A. Stephens

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Neil Hankerson • executive vice president
David Scroggy • product development
Andy Karabatsos • vice president & controller
Mark Anderson • general counsel
Randy Stradley • director of editorial
Cindy Marks • director of production & design
Mark Cox • art director
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SING
FOR YOUR
LIFE

TOKOROZAWA CITY
YAHOO
WHASSA PRO'LEM, MANABE?! C'MON-- HAVVA LIL DRINKIE!
B-BUT... MY DEADLINE...
DEADLINES SCHMEDLINES I GOT FIVE FRIGGIN' STRIPS DUE TOMORROW SHEEIT..

GEE, IS THIS JOINT SLEAZY OR WHAT.. I-I'M NOT USED TO PLACES LIKE THIS
OH, JUST ZIP IT, WILL YA? NOW AND THEN A GIRL WANTS TO RELAX
C'MON, MIAN.. LET'S GO, PLEASE?
JEEZ..HAVEN'T YOU EVER BEEN TO A CLUB BEFORE?
I NEVER HAD THE MONEY TO WASTE ON ONE, THAT'S WHY!
NO MONEY, THAT PART I BELIEVE
HEY! DON'T SMOKE, FOR CHRISSAKE! THIS IS A HEALTHY COMIC BOOK!
IT'S COOL, IT'S COOL I'M AN ANDROID, REMEMBER?
YOU'RE STILL SETTING A BAD EXAMPLE!
BOY, HAVE YOU EVER GOT A STICK UP YOUR BUTT!
WHY DON'T YOU JUST RELAX AND LOOSEN UP FOR ONCE, HUH?!

LOOK--YOUR PAL BABO KNOWS HOW TO PARTY.
HUH?
NYAAA HA HA HA HA!
OOOH, MR BABS, I JUST LOOOVE YOUR PRICKLY WHISKERS.
AND I JUST LOVE IT WHEN YOU CALL ME BABS, SWEET THING!
MR. BABO, SIR? CAN I HAVE A TEENY-WEENY LIL DRINK, TOO?
SUCK IT UP, CUTIE! GOTTA WATER THOSE WATER-MELONS!
OOH, MR. BABO! STAAAP IT! HEE HEE!
THAT LECHEROUS LITTLE GNOME!
I WONDER IF HE'S GOT ANY MONEY..
EEEK! MR.BABO!
OOAAH!!

N-NOT HERE... PEOPLE WILL SEE..
DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT THAT, HONEY. JUST PREPARE FOR PARADISE
OH, MAAAN !
THIS IS JUST TOO MUCH..
YEEP!
WHAK
WATARU !!
=HIC=
FILL ME UP !!
WHAT TH' HELL... FOR A LITTLE WIMP WHO AIN'T DRINKIN, YOU SURE ARE RED
ME, UH, ME?! I, ER...
YOU'RE NOT THINKING ABOUT YOU-KNOW-WHAT, ARE YOU ?!
UH, I, UH...
WELL, EHEH, YOU KNOW, THIS KIND OF PLACE DOES HAVE THAT EFFECT ON A MAN.
ALL RIGHT, EVERYBODY!!

WHAT A RACKET! WHO'S SHE?
WHAT?! YOU DON'T KNOW WHO THAT IS, MIAN?
SHE'S ONLY THE MOST FAMOUS SINGER IN TOKOROZAWA! THAT'S LIM SWEET.
HER SONGS ARE RADICAL ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT ANTHEMS, SO THE EMPIRE'S ALWAYS HASSLING HER
NO KIDDIN'..
TOO BAD SHE CAN'T SING.
YA-□-□-HOO!
BKAM

THUD THUD THUD
SHIT! IT'S THE COPS!
NOBODY MOVE!! THIS BAR IS SEALED FOR A HEALTH INSPECTION!
NO ONE LEAVES THE PREMISES!!
WHAT DO YOU WANT, PIGS!
YOU BETTER NOT SPOIL MY SHOW!
I WARNED YOU, REMEMBER?!
SING ONE MORE TIME, AND I'LL HAVE YOU IN CHAINS!
OH, GEE. DID YOU?
UH, JUST ONE MOMENT, SIR!
DO YOU OWN THIS DUMP?!

WHAT'S THE MEANING OF LETTING THIS EXTREMIST PERFORM HERE?
YOUR LIQUOR LICENSE IS HEREBY REVOKED FOR TEN YEARS!!
YAIEE!!
WHO ARE YOU CALLING AN EXTREMIST, COP?!
I JUST DON'T WANT TO BE AN IMPERIAL RUNNING DOG, LIKE YOU!
SILENCE!! TOKOROZAWA IS A FAITHFUL ALLY OF THE EMPIRE!
YOUR HIDEOUS SCREECHING AND WAILING IS A THREAT TO OUR DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS! YOU THREATEN THE VERY PEACE OF OUR COUNTRY!!
OH, FOR SURE! "ALLIES," ARE WE?!
YOU THUGS JUST DO EMPRESS SHION'S DIRTY WORK FOR HER! IS THAT WHAT YOU CALL PEACE?!
THEN I DON'T WANT IT!
HOW ABOUT YOU GUYS?!
NO WAY!!
YOU SHUT UP NOW!!

YOU, YOU TERRORIST! PROVOCATEUR! YOU'RE AN ENEMY OF ALL GOOD CITIZENS!
SEIZE HER, MEN!!
SPLOCK!
HEH HEH
SIR! ARE YOU OKAY?!
HAHAHAHAHA
WHO THE--

AWW MIAN
YOU LITTLE BITCH!
WHRAK
YOU GUYS GOT A LOT OF NERVE, BUGGIN' ME WHEN I'M DRINKING!
I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW I'M IN ONE BAAAD MOOD!

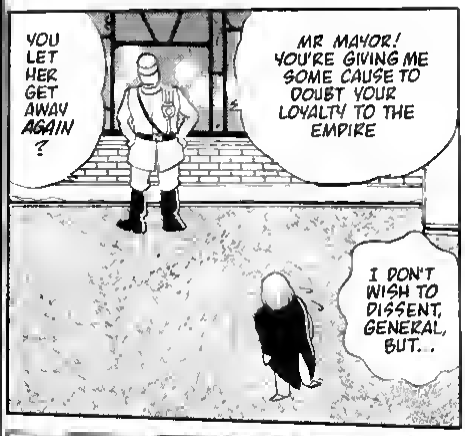
WHRAKK
SO TAKE A HIKE !!
THDD
OH, GOD NOT AGAIN...
WHAT ARE YOU IDIOTS DOING?! SHE'S JUST A GIRL!
JUST SHOOT HER AND BE DONE WITH IT!
GET 'EM, BOYS!
ARG!
KILL!

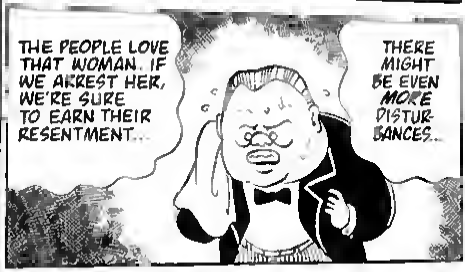
MOVE YOUR ASS, RUNT!!
YOU WON'T WORK OFF A SINGLE BEER THAT WAY!
AW, GIVE ME A BREAK..
I'LL GIVE YOU A BREAK ALL RIGHT, YOU GRUBBY LITTLE OINK! DRINKING AND PAWING ME WITHOUT ANY MONEY!
AND THEN TRYING TO SNEAK OUT THE BACK!
HOW YOU GOING TO PAY US BACK?!
ALL I'VE GOT TO SELL IS MY BODY.
WHAT GOOD IS THIS BAG OF BLUBBER?!
WHOA!
WHOA!
LET ME SHOW YOU, BABY!
SMEERP

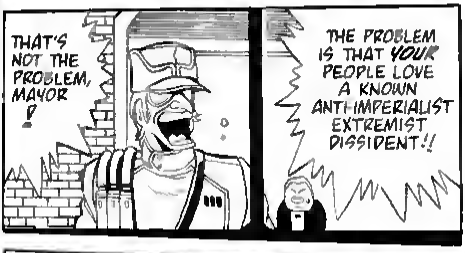
YOU SLIMY LITTLE PERVERT !!!
KOAK
WHDD
VHOK
HEY! WATARU! STOP BEING DEAD ALREADY!
HEY, THANKS FOR STEPPING IN BACK THERE.
YOU SAVED MY ASS FOR SURE.
NO TROUBLE, DEAR
I WAS GETTING ALL ITCHY FOR ACTION, ANYWAY.
EK'S EHH
MY NAME'S MIAN--NICE TMEETCHA !
UH, SHOULDN'T YOU, UMM, TREAT HIM A LITTLE MORE CAREFULLY... ?
OH, THIS THING? IT'S COOL--HE'S JUST MY PET.
HEY, SAP! HELLO!
"PET"..?

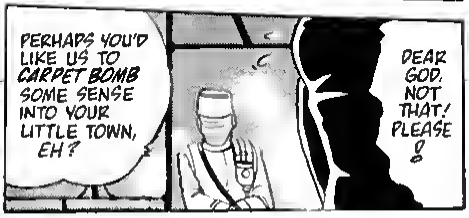
HEY, DO PEOPLE FREAK OUT LIKE THAT EVERY TIME YOU SING?
HMPH! NICE WAY TO PUT IT!
NAW, IT'S JUST THEY'RE REALLY CLAMPING DOWN NOW. I DON'T MUCH LIKE FIGHTS.
FOR SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T LIKE FIGHTS, YOU SURE LIKE TO START THEM!
YEAH... I'M KIND OF A ONE-WOMAN REBELLION.
A REBELLION? THAT?
YOU HEARD ME
IT'S MY WAY OF FIGHTING THE EMPIRE. NOT MUCH, BUT IT'S ALL I GOT.
SURE, I KNOW YOU CAN'T CALL THAT FIGHTING. MORE LIKE A MOSQUITO BITE...
BUT IF I DON'T DO WHAT I CAN, I COULDN'T FACE MYSELF IN THE MIRROR EACH MORNING
IT MAY NOT GO SO WELL NEXT TIME.

WE'LL SEE, WE'LL SEE.
UH OH-- TIME TO GO.
I STILL GOT SOME WORK TO DO SEE YA!
A REAL STAR
YOU SAID IT! SPECIAL PERFORMANCE AT THE BAR EXETER!!
I'VE GOT TWO MORE GIGS TONIGHT!
HEY, IF YOU FEEL LIKE IT, DROP ON BY!
THE BAR EXETER, HMM..
OH, RATS! I DIDN'T GET HER AUTOGRAPH
THIS TIME SHE'S GONNA BE IN REAL TROUBLE..
HUH?
MIAN! MY LIFE'S IN DANGER, TOO!
STAY RIGHT HERE AND DIE QUIETLY!


YOU LET HER GET AWAY AGAIN ?
MR MAYOR! YOU'RE GIVING ME SOME CAUSE TO DOUBT YOUR LOYALTY TO THE EMPIRE
I DON'T WISH TO DISSENT, GENERAL, BUT..


THE PEOPLE LOVE THAT WOMAN. IF WE ARREST HER, WE'RE SURE TO EARN THEIR RESENTMENT...
THERE MIGHT BE EVEN MORE DISTURBANCES..


THAT'S NOT THE PROBLEM, MAYOR !
THE PROBLEM IS THAT YOUR PEOPLE LOVE A KNOWN ANTI-IMPERIALIST EXTREMIST DISSIDENT!!

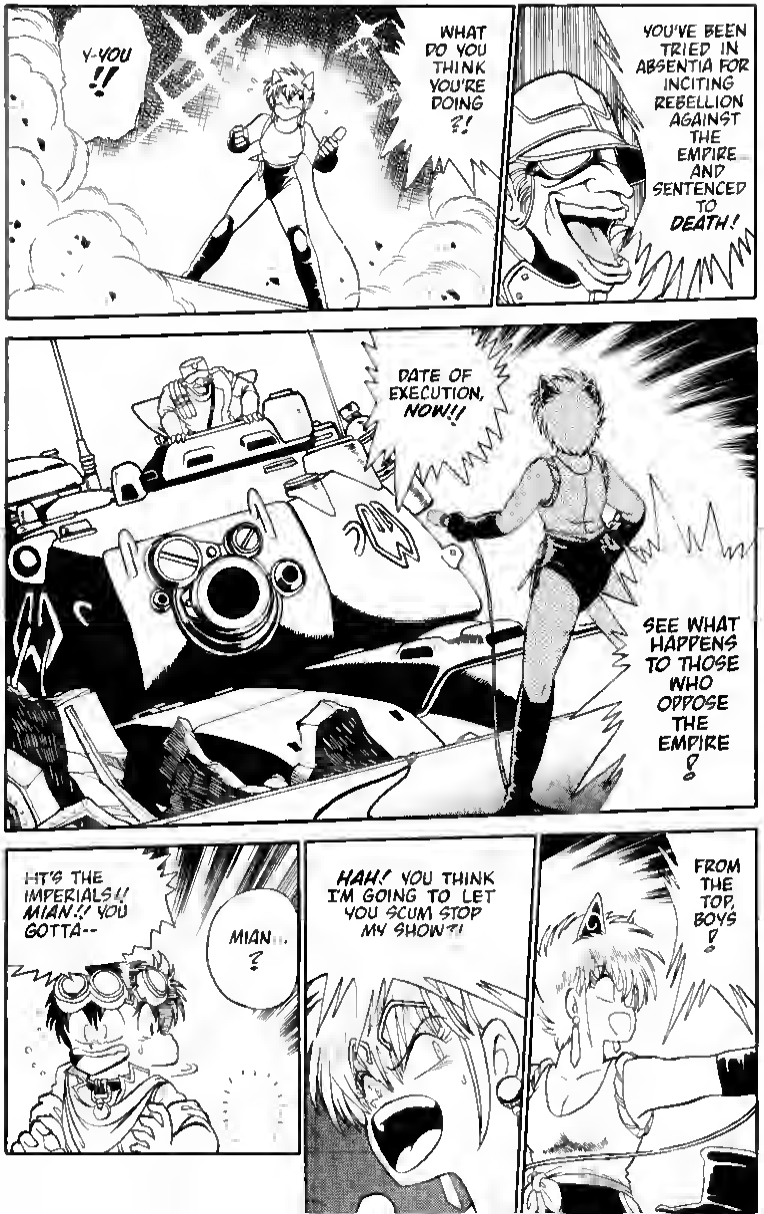

PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE US TO CARPET BOMB SOME SENSE INTO YOUR LITTLE TOWN, EH?
DEAR GOD. NOT THAT! PLEASE !

IT'S JUST THAT, AS ONE ENTRUSTED WITH THE GOVERNANCE OF MY PEOPLE, I'D LIKE TO AVOID ANY UNNECESSARY--
ENOUGH !!
SILENCE !!
IF I CAN'T TRUST YOU, I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE VIXEN MYSELF!

WOW! SHE SURE KNOWS HOW TO WORK A CROWD.
IF SHE'S THIS POPULAR, NO WONDER THEY WANT TO LOCK HER UP
WHEN YOU SAID SHE'S IN "REAL TROUBLE NOW," YOU MEAN THOSE GUYS'LL BE BACK AGAIN?
IF THAT'S ALL, THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT
WAY TO GO!
ENCORE!!
ALL RIGHT! YOU GUYS ARE GREAT!
YOU'RE SMOKING TONIGHT!
WE'RE REALLY GONNA KICK OUT THE JAMS, NOW!!

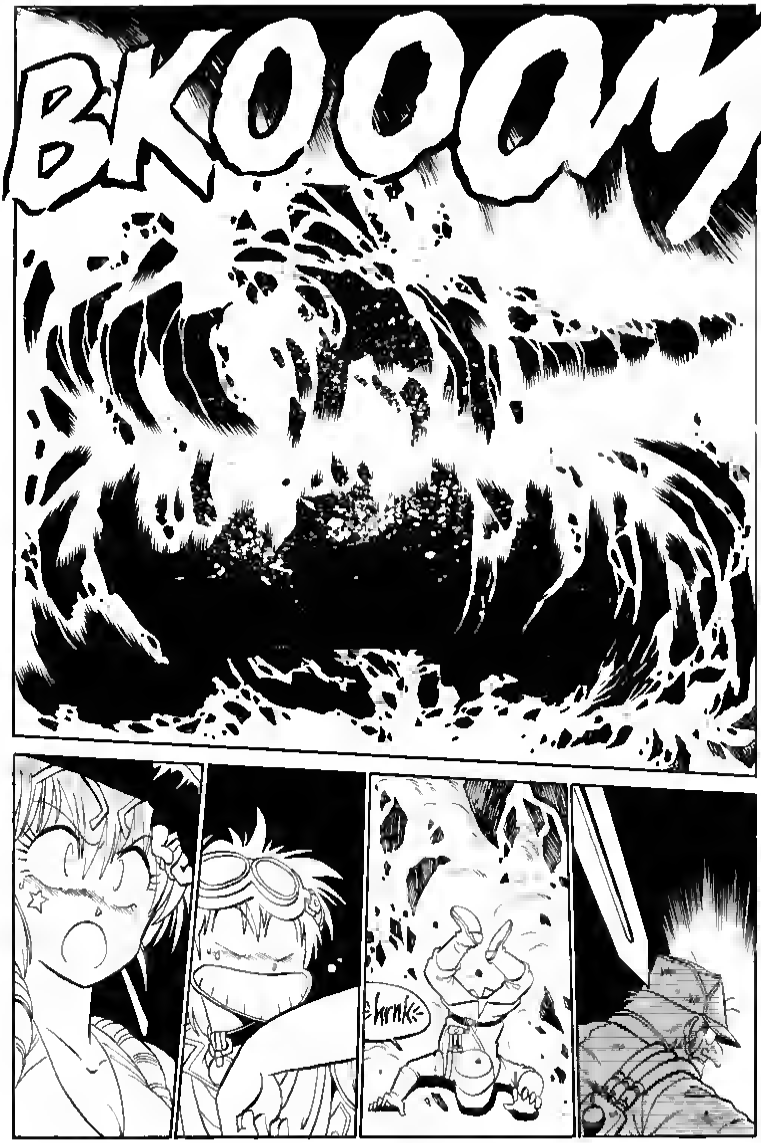
OKAY, GUYS! LET'S TEAR IT UP!
WHRAT
WHRMMBBBLE
!
KRASSH

SKRASSHOOM
RMBRMBRMBRMB
THE PARTY'S OVER, YOU FOOLS !!
KRNMMM


Y-YOU!!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
YOU'VE BEEN TRIED IN ABSENTIA FOR INCITING REBELLION AGAINST THE EMPIRE AND SENTENCED TO DEATH!
DATE OF EXECUTION, NOW!!
SEE WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE WHO OPPOSE THE EMPIRE!
IT'S THE IMPERIALS!! MIAN!! YOU GOTTA--
MIAN...?
HAH! YOU THINK I'M GOING TO LET YOU SCUM STOP MY SHOW?!
FROM THE TOP, BOYS!

YOU WANT TO SHOOT, THEN SHOOT, YOU COWARDS!
YA AAYYY!!
YAHOO!
WHAT TH-?!
SHE'S PRETTY GOOD, ISN'T SHE? MAKES YOU TAP YOUR FEET, HUH?
GET OFF MY TANK!!
PREPARE TO FIRE!

KCHAK
LIM!! LOOK OUT!


BKOOM
Hrnk

ACK!
MY GOD! YOU'RE- YOU'RE MIAN TORIS!!
DON'T MOVE!
PIPE DOWN, YOU IDIOTS! DOWN IN FRONT!!
OOOF!
NOW THEN, GENERAL-- WHY DON'T YOU AND I JUST SIT AND LISTEN TO LIM SING, EH?
YYES, MA'AM!
LIM! YOU'VE GOT A NEW FAN! TAKE IT AWAY!!
THANKS, MIAN!

YAAAYYY
LIMMM!
YAYV!
YOWW!
BAR AOKI
CHEERS!
YAHAHA! WHAT A BLAST!
BEST GIG OF MY LIFE!!
SO YOU'RE THE FAMOUS MIAN TORIS, HEH?
SORRY I DIDN'T MAKE THE CONNEC-TION BEFORE.

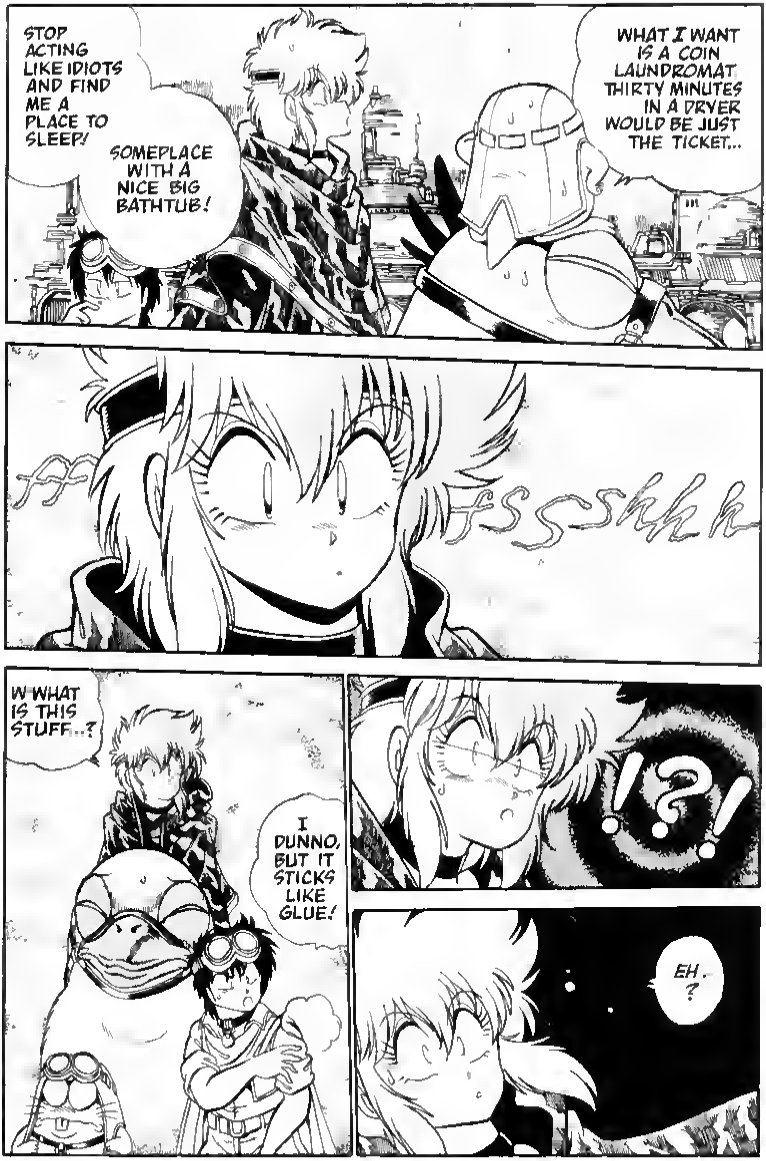
SO WHAT'D YOU DO TO THAT POOR GENERAL?
TIED HIM IN A KNOT, DROPPED HIM IN THE TOILET AND FLUSHED HIM!
SHUDDUP WITH THAT HORRIBLE NOISE!!
THE IDEA IS TO SING, YOU NITWIT!
YOU'RE TURNING MY SINGLE MALT INTO A WHISKEY SOUR!
AW, YOU SHUT UP!
OH, YEAH?! WELL, WHY DON'T YOU SING YOURSELF, THEN, IF YOU THINK YOU'RE SO HOT!
LITTLE OL' ME?
THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER ASK!
HMPH HMPH HMPH!
EHHEH
AAHH

OH, MY GOD WHAT A RACKET!
...!!
GEE, THIS SINGING STUFF IS EASY!!
OH YES OF C-COURSE
I-I NEVER KNEW. HOW MUCH I LOVED MY HEARING.
MGNNK...!
SMAK SMAK

MIAN'S ACHILLES HYDROVALVE

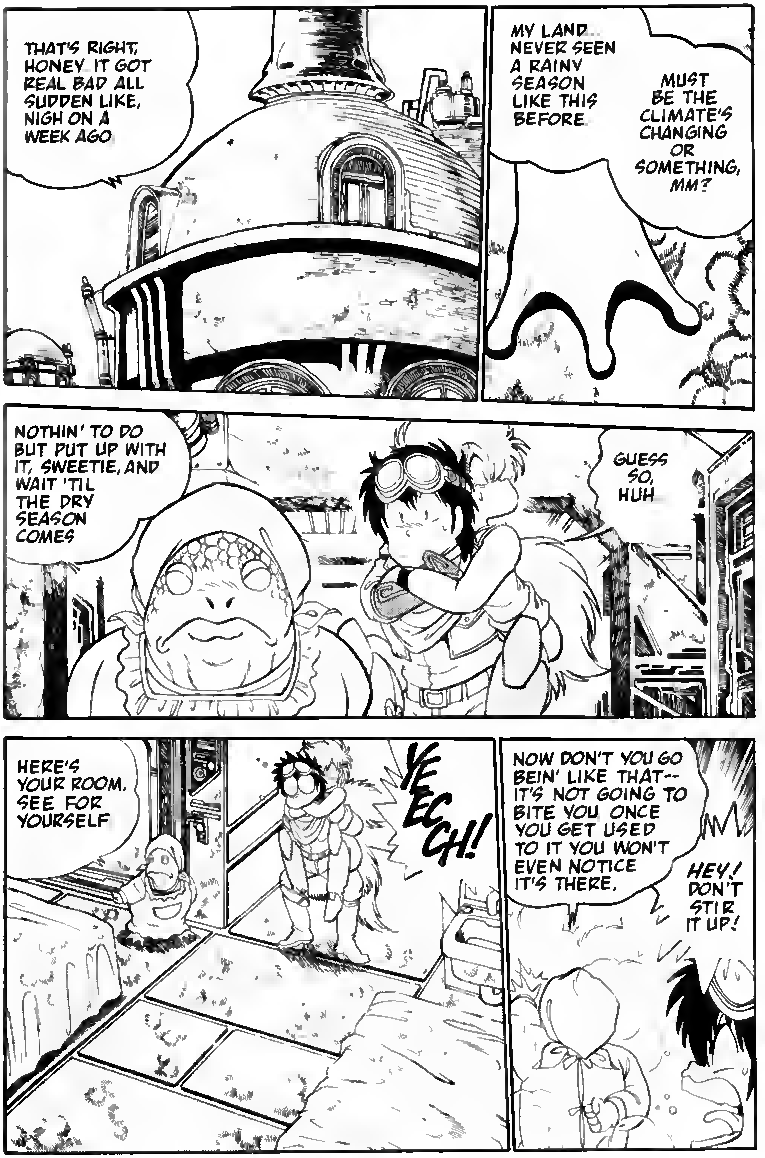
OH, GROSS! WHAT'S WITH THIS TOWN?!
IT'S ALL COVERED WITH MOLD!
SO WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO ABOUT IT? IT'S RAINY SEASON, AFTER ALL
YEAH, I KNOW, BUT ISN'T THIS A BIT MUCH?
HMM... NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...
OH, RATS... I JUST HATE RAIN..
IT'S SUCH A DRAG. IT MAKES ME GLOOMY, GET'S ME DOWN, MAKES ME--
HEY! W-WAIT UP!!
SPLUSH
SPLORK
UH-OH..

YOU HATE THE RAIN? HOW ABOUT ME?!
MY BODY SUCKS WATER RIGHT UP-- I'M JUST LIKE A SPONGE, I AM
SPLUT
SPLOCK
YOU GOT THAT RIGHT-- YOU'RE A SPONGE, FOR SURE
Hmph!
WATCH YOUR TONGUE!
SPSSHH
BLRK!
BEHAVE YOURSELF!
BLOOSH!
HEH HEH-HEH! YOU REALLY ARE A LITTLE SPONGE PUFFY!
OH YEAH?! JUST BECAUSE I LIKE TO SOAK PEOPLE A BIT--
CUT THE CRAP!?
I'M PISSED OFF ENOUGH AS IS!


STOP ACTING LIKE IDIOTS AND FIND ME A PLACE TO SLEEP!
SOMEPLACE WITH A NICE BIG BATHTUB!
WHAT I WANT IS A COIN LAUNDROMAT. THIRTY MINUTES IN A DRYER WOULD BE JUST THE TICKET...
FFFssshhh
W-WHAT IS THIS STUFF...?
I DUNNO, BUT IT STICKS LIKE GLUE!
!?!
EH.?

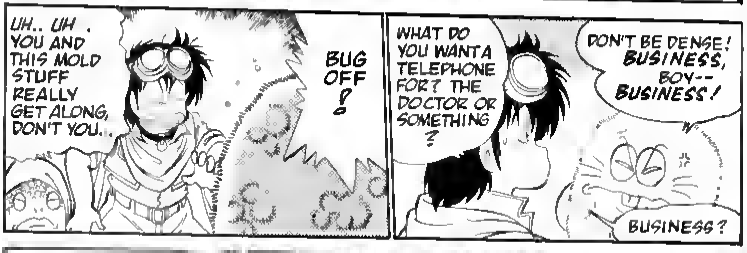
WHAT THE--
--HECK ?
HEY! HEY, MIAN! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
WAHAHAHA! WHAT A GREENHORN! FELL RIGHT OUT OF THE SADDLE!
WHAT HAPPENED? ARE YOU THAT TIRED?
NO I I JUST DIZZY . I .
NOT GETTING RUSTY, ARE YOU?
YOU WANT TO DIE ?!

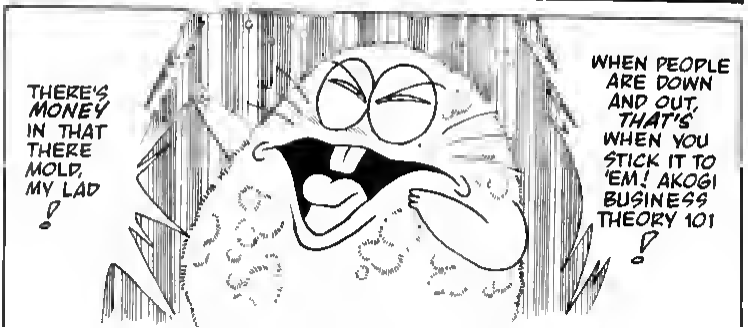
B-BUT . YOU'RE STILL KIND OF WOBBLY! ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE OKAY?
LOOK, JUST SHUT UP ALREADY! IT'S NOTHING!
SHAK
"NOTHING" MY ASS! YOU CAN'T EVEN WALK!
WHA-?
WHA-?
WHA-?
MY BODY..!
I C-CAN'T MOVE!
AIEEEEE! WATARU!! HELLLLP!
STOP SQUEALING! CAN'T YOU SEE MIAN IS--
I'M I'M I'M MOLDING!


THAT'S RIGHT, HONEY. IT GOT REAL BAD ALL SUDDEN LIKE, NIGH ON A WEEK AGO.
MY LAND... NEVER SEEN A RAINY SEASON LIKE THIS BEFORE.
MUST BE THE CLIMATE'S CHANGING OR SOMETHING, MM?
NOTHIN' TO DO BUT PUT UP WITH IT, SWEETIE, AND WAIT 'TIL THE DRY SEASON COMES
GUESS SO, HUH
HERE'S YOUR ROOM, SEE FOR YOURSELF
YE ECH!
NOW DON'T YOU GO BEIN' LIKE THAT-- IT'S NOT GOING TO BITE YOU ONCE YOU GET USED TO IT YOU WON'T EVEN NOTICE IT'S THERE.
HEY! DON'T STIR IT UP!

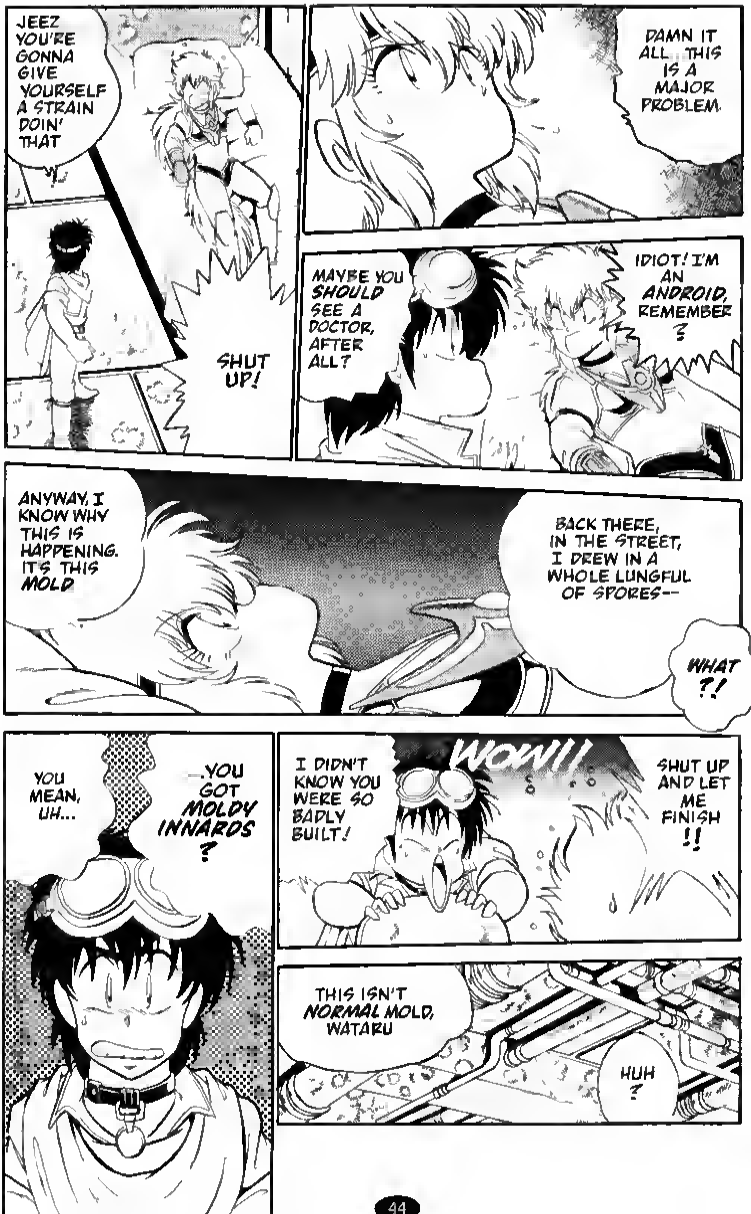
BY THE WAY-- YOU YOUNG FOLKS DON'T HAVE WATCHES OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT, DO YOU?
UH, SURE. I'VE GOT ONE.
JUST THOUGHT I SHOULD WARN YOU. THIS MOLD PLUGS UP ANY KIND OF MACHINERY IT GETS ON
NO KIDDING! IT'S STOPPED!

MAY I PRESUME, MADAM, THAT THE TELEPHONES ARE EQUALLY AFFECTED?
UH-K!


UH.. UH. YOU AND THIS MOLD STUFF REALLY GET ALONG, DON'T YOU..
BUG OFF!
WHAT DO YOU WANT A TELEPHONE FOR? THE DOCTOR OR SOMETHING?
DON'T BE DENSE! BUSINESS, BOY-- BUSINESS!
BUSINESS?


THERE'S MONEY IN THAT THERE MOLD, MY LAD!
WHEN PEOPLE ARE DOWN AND OUT, THAT'S WHEN YOU STICK IT TO 'EM! AKOGI BUSINESS THEORY 101!

GONNA RAKE IT IN, ME!
DO WHAT YOU LIKE! I PASS!
I'LL DO MY BEST ABOUT DINNER, HON, BUT THERE'S NO GAS OR ELECTRICITY
I GUESS THAT MEANS NO BATH?
WELL, YOU CAN TAKE A BATH-- IF YOU LIKE SWIMMING IN PURE MOLD
SHALL I...
THANKS BUT NO THANKS
HNNF!
HHRRNNFFFF!
FORGET IT!


JEEZ YOU'RE GONNA GIVE YOURSELF A STRAIN DOIN' THAT
SHUT UP!
DAMN IT ALL... THIS IS A MAJOR PROBLEM.
MAYBE YOU SHOULD SEE A DOCTOR, AFTER ALL?
IDIOT! I'M AN ANDROID, REMEMBER?
ANYWAY, I KNOW WHY THIS IS HAPPENING. IT'S THIS MOLD
BACK THERE, IN THE STREET, I DREW IN A WHOLE LUNGFUL OF SPORES--
WHAT?!
YOU MEAN, UH...
...YOU GOT MOLDY INNARDS?
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE SO BADLY BUILT!
WOW!!
SHUT UP AND LET ME FINISH!!
THIS ISN'T NORMAL MOLD, WATARU
HUH?

I'D GUESS IT'S A BIOWEAPON, ENGINEERED FOR ANDROIDS. DESIGNED TO PARALYZE A MECHANICAL BODY, SEE
ACK!
GLEEP!
IT WON'T AFFECT YOU, DUMMY!
I BET THEY'VE SEEDED EVERY TOWN THEY THOUGHT WE MIGHT PASS THROUGH WITH THIS STUFF
AFTER ALL, IT'S THE RAINY SEASON A LITTLE EXTRA MOLD WON'T MAKE PEOPLE SUSPICIOUS.
BUT WHY ON EARTH...
TO TAKE ME ALIVE, THAT'S WHY
OTHERWISE, WHY GO TO ALL THIS TROUBLE...?
HMMM...
EH HEH
HEH HEH
WHAT ARE YOU LEERING ABOUT?
HEH HEH HEH...
SO, LIKE, YOU CAN'T MOVE A MUSCLE, EH?
YOU REALLY CAN'T MOVE AT ALL?

EVEN IF I DO THIS?
!!
OR THIS...?!
WATARU! YOU--
OR MAYBE EVEN.. THIS?
HEY!
POKE POKE
YOU CAN'T RESIST AT ALL ?!?
WHY, YOU LITTLE--
HEH HEH..
I'VE WAITED.. GOD, HOW I HAVE WAITED FOR THIS DAY...
AT LAST!! I STAND TRIUMPHANT OVER THE HELPLESS BODY OF MIAN TORIS
!!!
...

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
YOU TOUCH ME AND I'LL SQUEEZE THAT COLLAR OF YOURS UNTIL YOU SQUEAK!
FOOLISH GIRL...
IF THIS MOLD'S SCREWED UP YOUR MACHINERY...
IT'S ALSO SCREWED UP THE COLLARS!!
:GULP: UH-OH... YOU FIGURED IT OUT, HUH...
OH, YES INDEEDY YES, YOU'VE HAD YOUR FUN, WORKING ME TO THE BONE ALL THESE MONTHS!
YOU'VE BEATEN ME, ABUSED ME...
HEY! HOLD ON! WAIT! THIS IS COWARDLY!
COWARDLY?! DAMN RIGHT IT'S COWARDLY!! AT LAST, REVENGE-- SWEET, COWARDLY REVENGE!!
HEY OWW!
OOF!
WHUDD
STOP! NO! DON'T!! KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF ME, YOU IDIOT!!

IF YOU THINK YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH THIS, WATARU, YOU ARE WRONG! DEAD WRONG!
I'LL TEAR YOUR HEART OUT FOR THIS!!
CAN'T HEAR YOU, CAN'T HEAR YOU!
WHATCHA GONNA DO TO ME, RUSTBUCKET?!
I'M OUTTA HERE, BABY!
WAIT! COME BACK HERE!
YA HA HA! WHAT A CHARGE!
I HAVEN'T FELT THIS GOOD IN AGES!

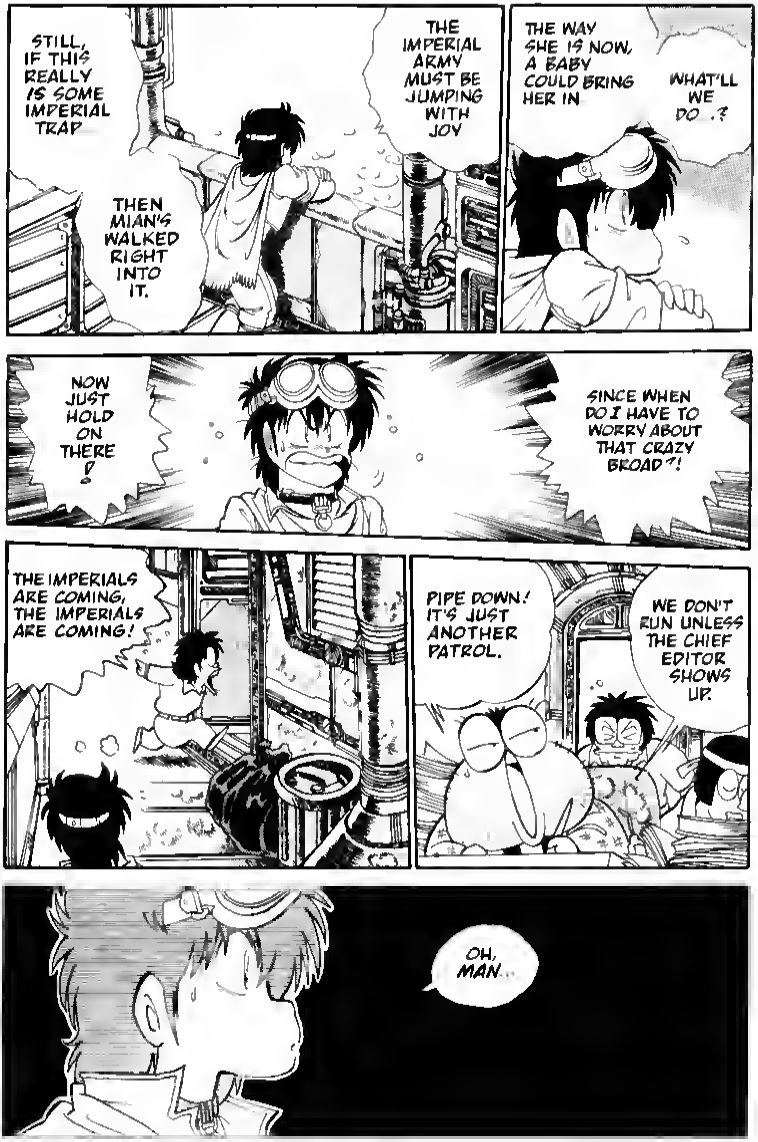
FINALLY.. AFTER A WHOLE YEAR OF ABUSE AND SUFFERING AS HER DOG! I'M FREE, A FREE CHARACTER!!
NO MORE STRESS!
NO MORE FRUSTRATION!
?!?
MAYBE. JUST MAYBE
...I'VE REALLY SCREWED UP
WHAT IF MIAN GETS BETTER?
I'LL BE DEAD MEAT!

OH, MAN-- THIS IS REALLY BAD...
EVEN IF I RUN AWAY, SHE'LL TRACK ME TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH...
OH, SHIT... FREE FOR WHAT? TO SPEND MY WHOLE LIFE ON THE RUN?
HEAVE-HO!
WHAT THE HECK?!
UPSY DAISY!
AKOGI
AH, THERE YOU ARE! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR HOURS!
HERE YOU GO, MAC-- THE GOODS YOU ORDERED CHECK 'EM OUT, SIGN HERE
WHATCHA UP TO THIS TIME?
HEH HEH.. GOOD WORK, BOYS.
BABO?!
WELL, SEE YOU LATER, RAKE IT IN, MAC.
LEAVE IT TO ME!

GOOD, GOOD, JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED..
WHAT'RE YOU UP TO? WERE THOSE GUYS FROM AKOGI?
DAMN STRAIGHT! THE AKOGI UNDERGROUND PIPELINE!
UNDERGROUND PIPELINE..?
THE ULTIMATE BLACK MARKET, LADDIE! FROM NUKES TO SCREEN TONE, YOU NEED IT, WE GOT IT!
ANY AKOGI, ANYWHERE, ANYTIME, CAN GET ANYTHING FOR ANY PRICE!
WOW.. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU GUYS WERE SO ORGANIZED.
WHAT'D YOU EXPECT? I GOT IN WITH THEM, AND HERE IT IS.
I'VE POURED EVERY LAST CENT OF MY SAVINGS INTO THESE BABIES.
'COURSE, SOME OF OUR MERCHANDISE IS A LITTLE SHY ON QUALITY...
SO WHAT DID YOU GET..?
MOLD MAGIC™
"MOLD MAGIC™"?

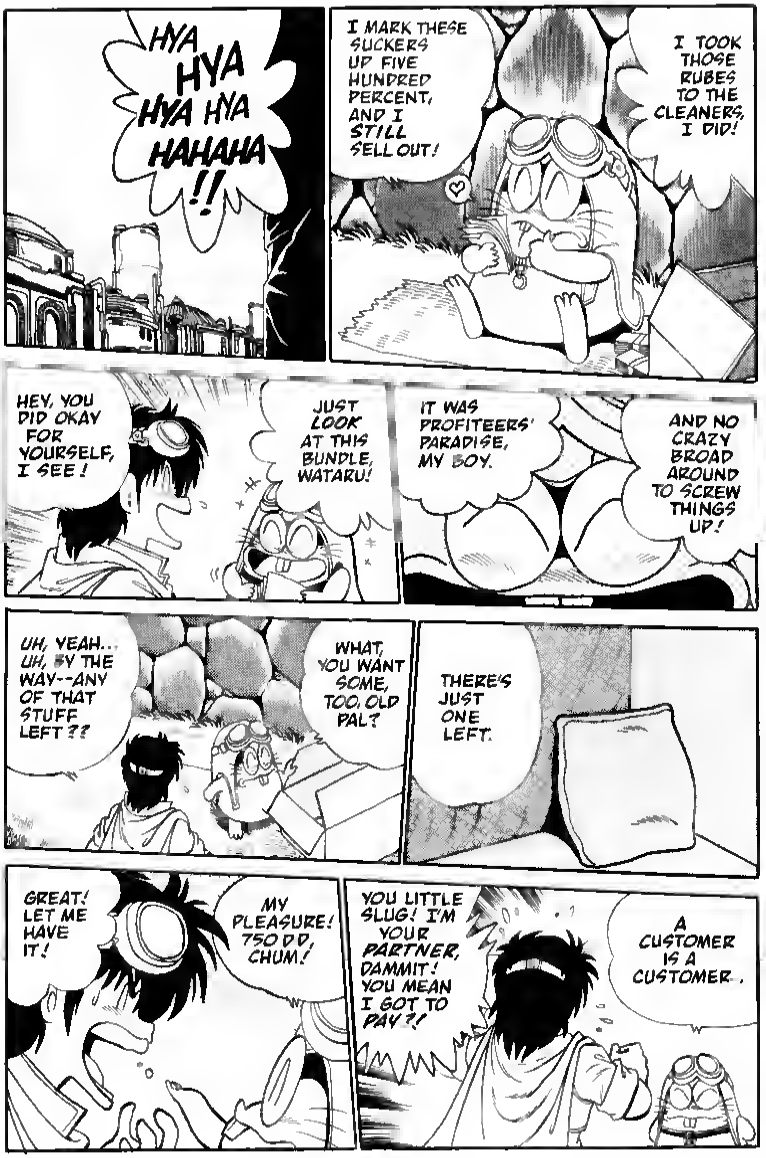
GOOD GRACIOUS ME!
WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME ARE YOU DOING, MISSY? IT'S SUPPER-TIME!
SUPPER?! TO HELL WITH SUPPER!! JUST GET ME OUT OF THIS THING!
NOW I'VE GOT A HEART OF GOLD, YOUNG LADY, BUT I WON'T HAVE YOU PLAYING WITH THE MATTRESSES LIKE THAT!
YOU THINK I'M DOING THIS FOR FUN?!
OOF!
I TELL YOU, YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY GET THE STRANGEST IDEAS! MY LAND!
WATARU, YOU LITTLE SCUMBAG.
YOU'RE MINCEMEAT, RUNT!!

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF PEOPLE WHEN THEY'RE DOWN!
YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS! IN SPADES!!
DAMN YOU, WATARU! I'LL FIND YOU EVEN IF I HAVE TO--
OH, MISSY, DO BE CAREFUL ON THE...
FWUDD
SKRASSH
WHAM
...STAIRS.
OH, MAN..
MAYBE I SHOULD GO BACK, APOLOGIZE. BUT IT'S TOO LATE TO SAY I WAS JUST JOKING.
AARG! YOU STUPID BLOCKHEAD! NEXT TIME THINK BEFORE YOU ACT!


STILL, IF THIS REALLY IS SOME IMPERIAL TRAP
THEN MIAN'S WALKED RIGHT INTO IT.
THE IMPERIAL ARMY MUST BE JUMPING WITH JOY
THE WAY SHE IS NOW, A BABY COULD BRING HER IN
WHAT'LL WE DO .?
NOW JUST HOLD ON THERE !
SINCE WHEN DO I HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THAT CRAZY BROAD"!
THE IMPERIALS ARE COMING, THE IMPERIALS ARE COMING!
PIPE DOWN! IT'S JUST ANOTHER PATROL.
WE DON'T RUN UNLESS THE CHIEF EDITOR SHOWS UP.
OH, MAN...

STEP RIGHT UP, STEP RIGHT UP, LADIES AAAND GENTS!!
HERE AT LAST, SUPER AKOGI MOLD MAGIC™! THE WORLD'S STRONGEST DEHYDRATION AGENT!!
HUH ?
ONE SHAKE OF MOLD MAGIC™ AND YOUR MILDEW PROBLEMS ARE HISTORY!
DRY CLOTHES, DRY HOMES, JUST 750D. A PACK ?
SOUNDS LIKE BULLSHIT TO ME! THERE'S ALL KINDS OF JUNK ON THE MARKET.
WHO SAYS THIS IS BETTER'N THE OTHER CRAP ?!
AH, MY DEAR MAN, YOU ARE MISINFORMED! MOLD MAGIC™ GOES TO THE SOURCE!
MILDEW BREEDS IN THE FOUL DANKNESS ?
BUT MOLD MAGIC™ BURNS AWAY MOISTURE LIKE A FLAMETHROWER ?!

JUST WATCH !!
FSHH!!
OOH!!
WOW!!
HOLY SHIT!
SO, AS I WAS SAYING, GOOD PEOPLE..AKOGI DEHYDRATORS WHISK MOLD AWAY LIKE MAGIC! TWO OR THREE PACKS, AND YOUR ROOMS'LL BE DRY AS THE DESERT SANDS, IN EVEN THE WORST OF THE WET SEASON. SO--WHO'S THE FIRST?!
YOU SOLD ME, BUDDY! IF IT KILLS THIS MOLD, IT'S ALL RIGHT BY ME!
ME, TOO!
THANK'EE, THANK'EE, COME AGAIN!
HEY, THERE, TYKE! DON'T EAT IT! STUNTS YOUR GROWTH!


HYA HYA HYA HYA HAHAHA !!
I MARK THESE SUCKERS UP FIVE HUNDRED PERCENT, AND I STILL SELL OUT!
I TOOK THOSE RUBES TO THE CLEANERS, I DID!
HEY, YOU DID OKAY FOR YOURSELF, I SEE!
JUST LOOK AT THIS BUNDLE, WATARU!
IT WAS PROFITEERS' PARADISE, MY BOY.
AND NO CRAZY BROAD AROUND TO SCREW THINGS UP!
UH, YEAH... UH, BY THE WAY--ANY OF THAT STUFF LEFT??
WHAT, YOU WANT SOME, TOO, OLD PAL?
THERE'S JUST ONE LEFT.
GREAT! LET ME HAVE IT!
MY PLEASURE! 750 DD, CHUM!
YOU LITTLE SLUG! I'M YOUR PARTNER, DAMMIT! YOU MEAN I GOT TO PAY?!
A CUSTOMER IS A CUSTOMER.

YOU KNOW I DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF CASH!!
OH, I'M SO SORRY I DIDN'T KNOW. I DON'T DO BUSINESS WITH PAUPERS.
I SAID HAND IT OVER, YOU GOUGING LITTLE RATBAG!
NO, NO, A THOUSAND TIMES NO!!
SKRUNCH
KSSH
EEK!
CHAN!
KRAK
WHUMP
FWOOP
OOF!

OWW...
"SHEE-IT, MAN. YOU REALLY THINK THAT BITCH IS HIDING OUT HERE?"
AN IMPERIAL PATROL?
WHAT DO YOU THINK, ASSHOLE! THAT'S WHY WE USED THE MOLD BUG HERE.
GODDAMN IT... THAT'S ONE BROAD I CAN DO WITHOUT. BESIDES, HOW DO WE EVEN KNOW OUR GUNS'LL WORK...?
DAMN!
!
IT'S-IT'S HER!!

D-D-D-DON'T MOVE! D-DR-DROP THE S-S-SWORD!!
IS IT REALLY HER.. MIAN TORIS?!
S-S-SURE AS SHIT! OH MY GOD.. CALL REINFORCEMENTS!
HEY--AIN'T SHE ACTING KINDA WEIRD..?
YEAH I DON'T THINK SHE CAN MOVE!
DON'T TELL ME THAT BIOWEAPON REALLY WORKED?! ON MIAN TORIS?!
WE'RE NOT DREAMING ARE WE?
OKAAAAY.. EASY NOW.. DON'T LET HER GET AWAY. THE TRAP WORKED... NOW IT'S OUR TURN

YOU SCUMBAGS! GET YOUR HANDS OFF ME!!
LET GO! I SAID LET GO!
YOU'RE HURTING ME!!
!!
HEY, MAN-- WHO'DA THOUGHT WE'D NAB HER SO EASY?
LEMME GO!!
THE EMPRESS IS GONNA LOVE THIS HOW ABOUT IT, SOLDIER-- TWO-RANK PROMOTION, DOUBLE PAY. IT'S THE BIG TIME!
MIAN?!
DAMMIT! I'VE GOT NO CHOICE!
BABO! FORGIVE ME!!
FSSHH
AIEE!!

HUH ?
HEY ! WHAT'S THAT ?!
IT'S MONEY! REAL MONEY !!
THAT'S OUR EMPRESS! SHE SENT OUR BONUS ALREADY !!
YAHOOO!!!
LONG LIVE THE QUEEN !!
WHAT TH-?
PSSST! MIAN !!
WATARU, IS THAT YOU?!
QUICK! SWALLOW THIS! IF WE'RE LUCKY IT'LL FIX YOU!
WHAT IS THIS CRAP?!
SHUT UP AND EAT IT!!
GULP

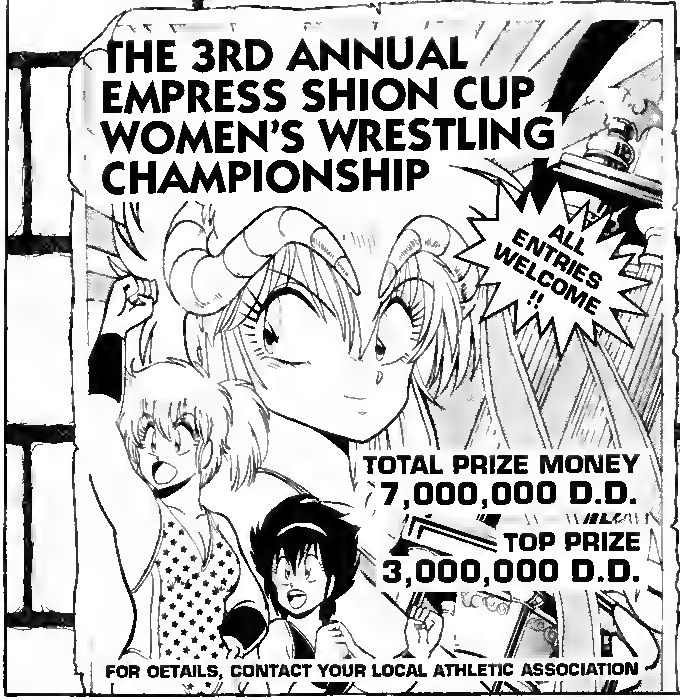
YAIEE! THAT'S MY MONEY! GET YOUR MEATHOOKS OFF IT!!
WHAT YOU SAYING?
THIS IS OUR BONUS, PYGMY?
IDIOT! SINCE WHEN DO BONUSES FALL OUTTA THE SKY?!
SPLASSH!!
UH, HOLD ON GUYS-- SHE'S BACK!
I TOLD YOU NOT TO TAKE YOUR EYES OFF HER!!
BUT SARGE! THE MONEY.. THE MONEY...

YOU DID WHAT? YOU FED ME CHEAP AKOGI MOLD KILLER ?!
HEY, COOL IT-- I FIXED YOU, RIGHT?
WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU THINKING!! I CAN'T EAT THAT CRAP! I'M A DELICATE, REFINED, AND ELEGANT ANDROID, YOU FRIGGIN' ASSHOLE!!
HMM... YOU'VE GOT A POINT.
HAPPY HAPPY JOY JOY!! RIGHT?
"JOY JOY" THIS, DIMBULB!
KRAK
B-BUT I SAVED YOUR LIFE!!
SHUT UP!! HOW DARE YOU!!

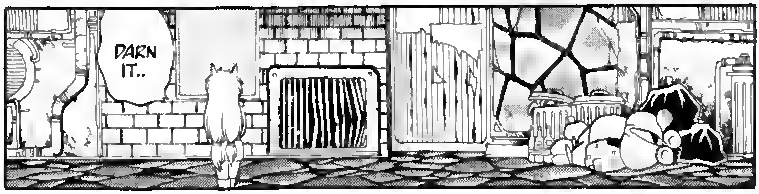
YOU TURNED ON YOUR MASTER, REMEMBER ?!!
NO! HELP! MERCY !!
HMPH!
JUST ONE MORE THING, WATARU..
AIEEE! I'M SORRY! I WAS BAD! NEVER AGAIN! I'LL GROVEL! I'LL CRAWL!!
THANKS!
THERE-- NOW WE'RE EVEN

LORD HA' MERCY, AT LAST A BREAK IN THOSE CLOUDS!
FINALLY, A CHANCE TO DRY THE BEDDING.
GOODNESS, DEARIES-- AREN'T YOU ON YOUR WAY YET?
GEE, WE MEANT TO LEAVE, BUT...
THE SUN COMING OUT LIKE THAT DRIED HIM RIGHT UP.
NOW WHAT'RE WE SUPPOSED TO DO WITH THE LITTLE RAISIN?!

TWO'S COMPANY,
THREE'S A
CROWD PLEASER.


THE 3RD ANNUAL EMPRESS SHION CUP WOMEN'S WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP
ALL ENTRIES WELCOME !!
TOTAL PRIZE MONEY 7,000,000 D.D.
TOP PRIZE 3,000,000 D.D.
FOR DETAILS, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

JUST THREE DAYS LEFT.


DARN IT..

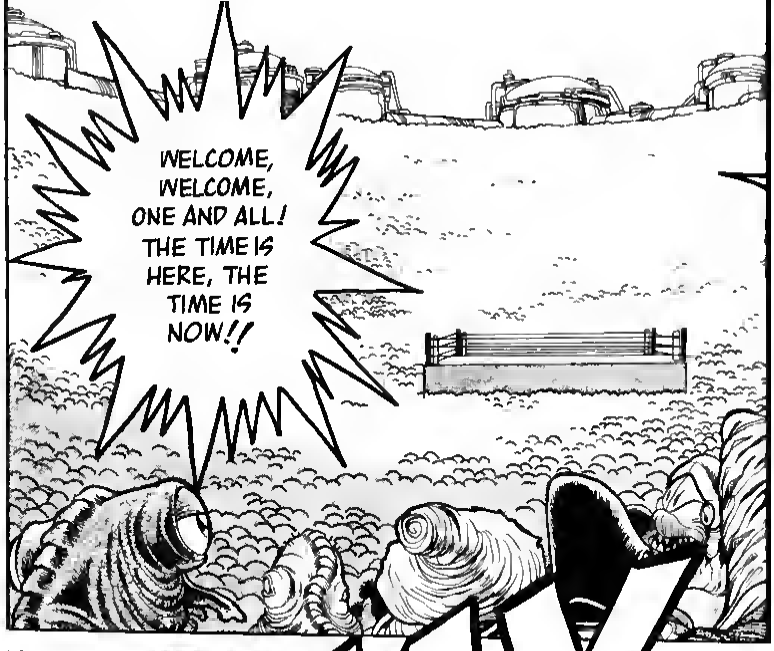
WHAT'S THIS GARBAGE?
SOME BIG IMPERIAL FREE-FOR-ALL... A WOMEN'S WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP, LOOKS LIKE.
HUH! TYPICAL OF HER?
HEY, CHECK IT OUT--THE WINNER GETS 3,000,000 D.D.!!
THREE MILLION DOUBLE-Ds?!!
♡ OH, MIAN- ♫!♪
WHANG
AWW... I DIDN'T EVEN SAY ANYTHING YET.
YOU DON'T NEED TO, YOU GREEDY LITTLE BLOB I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.
IN THAT CASE, WE CAN GET RIGHT DOWN TO BUSINESS I'M HAPPY TO REPRESENT YOU AS YOUR AGENT--
DON'T EVEN BOTHER.
"WRESTLING"... DEAR GODS, WHAT PRIMITIVE, BARBAROUS VIOLENCE.
SINCE WHEN HAVE YOU HAD ANYTHING AGAINST THAT?

ANYWAY, I'VE HEARD ABOUT THIS, AND IT'S A TAG-TEAM MATCH.
I DON'T HAVE A PARTNER, SO..
NO PROBLEM! WE JUST DOLL UP OLD WATARU A BIT, AND--
OH NO YOU DON'T!
EXCUSE ME...
YOU'RE SERIOUS? YOU WANT TO TEAM UP WITH ME?

MY NAME'S CHAU ROH.
I'VE COME ALL THE WAY FROM THE SOUTH LANDS FOR THE TOURNAMENT
BUT MY PARTNER TOOK SICK ALONG THE WAY...
AND YOU WANT ME TO STAND IN FOR HER
SORRY, HONEY...
..BUT WE'RE IN A HURRY WE'VE GOT A LONG ROAD AHEAD OF US
STILL, A LITTLE REST NEVER HURT ANYONE
ZIP IT, BUTTERBALL, OR I'LL DRIBBLE YOU AROUND THE ROOM A COUPLE TIMES
OKAY, I UNDERSTAND. YOU WON'T HELP ME..
SIGH
....
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT, DEARIE TRY SOMEONE ELSE
PFF
WELL . GOODBYE.
HEY! WAIT A MINUTE!
AW, C'MON, MIAN-- GIVE HER A CHANCE!
SINCE WHEN DO YOU ORDER ME AROUND?

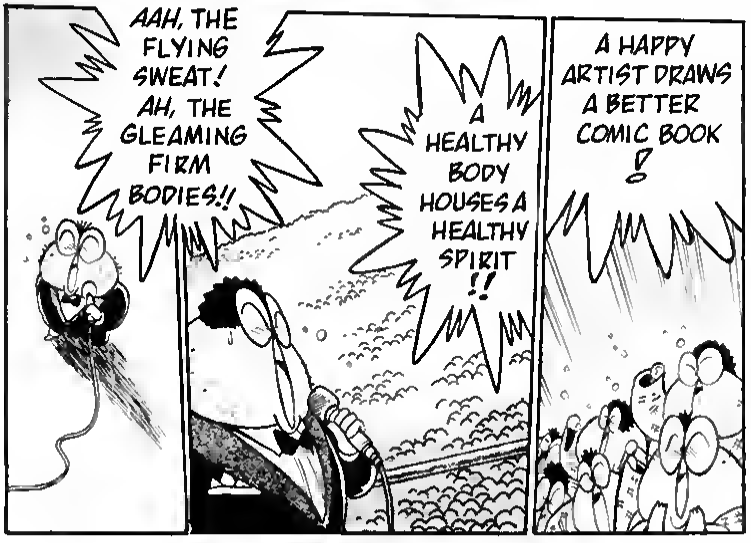
SHE'S COME A LONG WAY FOR THIS. WHAT'S THE HARM OF HELPING HER OUT?
WATARU, SOMETIMES YOU ARE SUCH A SOFTHEARTED GOON..
NO, REALLY, IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'LL FIND SOMEONE...
YEAH, MAYBE... BUT LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING--
--YOU CAN SEARCH THE WHOLE WORLD AND NOT FIND FREAKISH POWER LIKE HERS ANYWHERE ELSE!
STOP TALKING ABOUT ME LIKE I'M SOME KIND OF MONSTER!
SHE'S RIGHT. ANY NEGOTIATIONS FOR THIS DEAL SHOULD GO THROUGH MIAN'S MANAGER--AND THAT'S ME
SINCE WHEN ARE YOU MY MANAGER, YOU SCROFULOUS GIT!?!
GRNGRNNGRNNGRNN
!

GRUNT GRUNT GRN
IT'S HER IMPERIAL HIGHNESS' PRIVATE YACHT!!
IT'S THE EMPRESS SHION HERSELF!!
KPOF
KPOF
WHAT? THE EMPRESS SHION'S COMING?!
YOU BET! SHE'S HERE TO OBSERVE HER TOURNAMENT!


WELCOME, WELCOME, ONE AND ALL! THE TIME IS HERE, THE TIME IS NOW!!

IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO ANNOUNCE THE OPENING OF THE THIRD ANNUAL EMPRESS SHION CUP WOMEN'S WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP !!

JUST LISTEN TO THAT CROWD GO WILD !!
YAAAAY
THIS YEAR WE AGAIN BRING TOGETHER THE TOUGHEST, MEANEST, BIG BAD MOMMAS FROM ACROSS THE WHOLE CONTINENT!!


AAH, THE FLYING SWEAT! AH, THE GLEAMING FIRM BODIES!!
A HEALTHY BODY HOUSES A HEALTHY SPIRIT !!
A HAPPY ARTIST DRAWS A BETTER COMIC BOOK !

AND IN THE RING NOW, LAST YEAR'S CHAMPIONS, THE WILDCATS !!
AND ALL AROUND THEM, THEIR EAGER CHALLENGERS! ALL STRAINING AT THE LEASH FOR THE SOUND OF THE BELL!
THEY'RE ALL GALS, GUYS...

MISS MIAN ?

THANK YOU SO MUCH I KNOW IT WAS AN UNREASONABLE REQUEST.
YOU WANT TO THANK SOMEBODY, THANK WATARU
THAT IDIOT...
ALL RIGHT! IF MIAN WON'T DO IT, THEN IT'LL HAVE TO BE ME!

MY DISGUISE IS PERFECT! NOW TO REGISTER!
WATARU! WAIT! STOP!
ALL RIGHT, YOU WIN. JUST DON'T EMBARRASS YOUR MASTER
SO YOU'LL JOIN THE TOURNAMENT?!
LUCKY, HUH?
HELLO THERE, SWEETIE. THIS ISN'T A PLACE FOR LITTLE GIRLS
BETTER RUN HOME TO MOMMA BEFORE YOU GET HURT.
DON'T WET YOUR PANTIES!
NYAHAHA
THANKS FOR THE ADVICE, SISTER.

SILENCE, EVERYONE! HER IMPERIAL MAJESTY IS TAKING HER SEAT!
THREE CHEERS FOR EMPRESS SHION!!
HURRAH FOR EMPRESS SHION!!
GLORY TO HELGEBARD!!

HURRAH!
HURRAH!
HURRAH!
I CAN'T HEAR YOU!
HURRAH FOR EMPRESS SHION!!
HURRAH!
HURRAH!
HURRAH!
WELCOME, YOUR HIGHNESS.
AH MAYOR SONOYAN.

WELL? HOW ARE THE WRESTLERS THIS YEAR?
AHH, HAND-PICKED TO DELIGHT YOUR AUGUST PRESENCE I THINK YOU'LL FIND THEM MOST SATISFACTORY
HEH I ALWAYS ENJOY IT SOMETHING ABOUT BLOOD-SOAKED BODIES TORN APART IN THE RING...
BEHOLD, YOUR MAJESTY-- THE ATHLETES PAY THEIR RESPECT TO THE THRONE.
MIAN!
HI, THERE!

YOUR HIGHNESS ?! IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, MIAN ?
KESSLING !
YOUR MAJESTY !
.....
.....
UNDERSTAND?
YES, YOUR MAJESTY.
I'LL SEND FOR THEM AT ONCE
AND NOW, LET US BEGIN THE FIRST MATCH !!
THE LUCKY TEAM TO HAVE THE THE HONOR OF STARTING THE IMPERIAL TOURNAMENT IS...

IN THE RED CORNER, APPEARING HERE FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME, ENTRY NUMBER THIRTEEN, MIAN-CHAU!
AND IN THE BLUE CORNER, NUMBER THIRTY-EIGHT, THE FOURTH-RANKED AKO DOLLS!!
BETTER BE A GOOD FIGHT.
WHAT A MISERABLE-LOOKING PAIR.
WASTE OF TIME, EH?
WELL, THEN I'LL GO FIRST.
OKAY...
BE CAREFUL, MIAN! THEY LOOK PRETTY TOUGH!
DON'T DO ANYTHING TO GET YOURSELF HURT!
NOW YOU WORRY

KANGG
FIGHT
THE BELL HAS RUNG! THE MATCH IS UNDER WAY!!
MIAN FROM THE RED TEAM HAS ENTERED THE RING !
HURRAH YAHOO
HEY, HONEY... LEAVE SOME FUN FOR ME.
YOU WISH, BITCH I'LL THINK ABOUT IT.
HURRAH
YAAAY
WHIRAKKK

KHRAAM
!!
GNUFF!
FWUDD
HURRAH
SORRY, GUYS--- THEY'RE OUT.
THEY AREN'T DEAD, ARE THEY?
HEY, REF! WELL..?
HUH? OH, YEAH..

YAHOO!!!
JUST LIKE HER...
MA'AM?
LET'S HEAR IT FOR MIAN-CHAU!
THEY CLEAR THE FIRST MATCH WITH ONE KILLER PUNCH!!
OH, MIAN, YOU'RE SO STRONG!
JUST LET ME AT 'EM!
IT'S HAPPENING, FOLKS! THE ONCE IN A LIFETIME LONG SHOT, COMING OUT OF NOWHERE! MIAN-CHAU!
YAHOO!!!
THE TOP-RANKED WRESTLERS ARE DROPPING LIKE FLIES BEFORE MIAN-CHAU!
COME 'N' GET IT!!

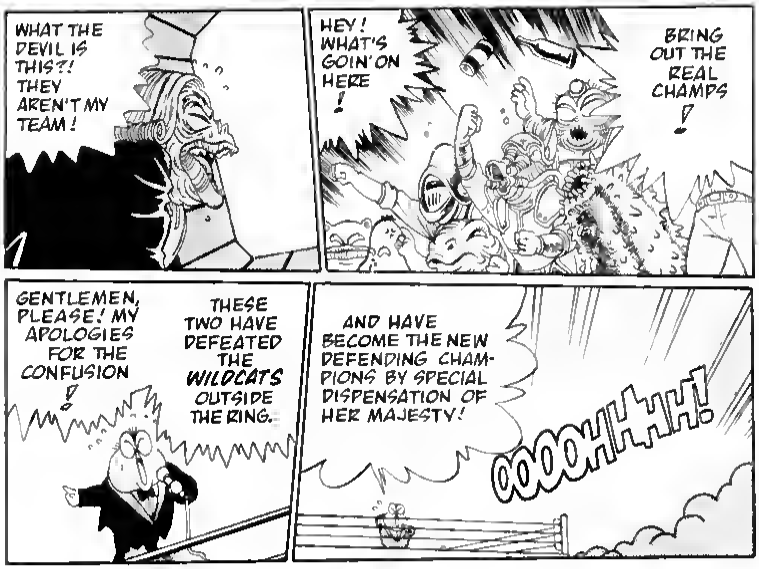
MIAN-CHAU DEMOLISHES THE TOP HWIWA TEAM! WIPES THE MAT WITH LAST YEAR'S RUNNERS-UP!!
NYA HA HA HA! LOVELY MONEY!!

YOW, BABY! YOUSE DA BEST!
HEY, MIAN! GIMME A SMILE!!
INCREDIBLE. SHE'S FINISHED EVERY MATCH SHE'S FOUGHT IN LESS THAN A MINUTE!
AND LOVING IT, THAT NUT CASE!
I-I CAN'T BELIEVE IT THAT SKINNY LITTLE THING..
A SKINNY LITTLE THING WHO'S BEEN DEFEATING ALL OF YOUR WRESTLERS, HMM, MAYOR?
YOUR HIGHNESS, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY...
BEEP
YOU...?!
DIDN'T I TELL YOU NEVER TO CALL ME HERE?!
WHAT?
YOU SAY SOMEONE'S BEEN WINNING ON EVERY MATCH?!

YOUR MAJESTY! IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, A LITTLE SOMETHING'S COME UP THAT I MUST TEND TO, UH, PERSONALLY
SO GO! I'VE SEEN ENOUGH OF YOUR REVOLTING FACE.
HMPH HE'S BEING CLEANED OUT, ALL RIGHT. NO WONDER HE'S NERVOUS.
UNGG...
YOU, YOU FILTHY SCUM..
..WE'LL NEVER LET YOU TAKE...
..OUR BELT.
SKRUNCH

GYAAAAA!!
YES, SIR. HE'S BEEN PUTTING EVERY BET ON THAT TEAM, ON MIAN-CHAU.
AND SO I, CONFOUND IT, HAVE BEEN WIPED OUT, RIGHT?!
THAT'S HIM, SIR.
NYA HA HA HA HA HA HA!
THIS IS THE LIFE!!

THE PROBLEM IS, HE'S BET HIS ENTIRE WINNINGS ON MIAN-CHAU IN THE CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH.
BUT WHEN HE'S WON THIS MUCH, DOESN'T THAT DRIVE DOWN HIS MARGIN?
IT'S NOT THAT, SIR IT'S THE BOOKIES-- NOW THEY'RE REFUSING TO TAKE BETS ON YOUR TEAM FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND.
WHAT?!
MY DEAR SIR...
!
YOU SEEM TO BE ON A BIT OF A ROLL, EH?!
NYA HA HA! YOU SAID IT, CHUM. THANKS FOR THE RIDE!
BUT TRAGICALLY, MY FRIEND, I NO LONGER HAVE ANYONE TO PLAY AGAINST. SEEMS THE LOCAL BETTORS ARE A BUNCH OF SPINELESS WORMS.
I SEE, SIR THEN PERHAPS YOU'LL DO ME THE HONOR...?
NO KIDDIN', PAL?
YES, SIR! I AM DEADLY SERIOUS, SIR! I PLACE MY BET ON THE DEFENDING CHAMPIONS--
MR MAYOR-- LOOK!


WHAT THE DEVIL IS THIS?! THEY AREN'T MY TEAM!
HEY! WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE!
BRING OUT THE REAL CHAMPS!
GENTLEMEN, PLEASE! MY APOLOGIES FOR THE CONFUSION!
THESE TWO HAVE DEFEATED THE WILDCATS OUTSIDE THE RING.
AND HAVE BECOME THE NEW DEFENDING CHAMPIONS BY SPECIAL DISPENSATION OF HER MAJESTY!
OOOOHHHH!

I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF THIS
THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THOSE TWO..
IT'S SHION. SHE'S GOT SOMETHING UP HER SLEEVE.
YAHOO
THE BELT HAS BEEN RETURNED!! IT'S UP FOR GRABS!!
YAKI!!
HURRAH
IT'S TIME FOR THE BATTLE OF CHAMPIONS! GLORY TO THE VICTORS!
MIAN! LET ME GO FIRST!
HEY, DON'T WORRY. THIS WON'T EVEN TAKE A MINUTE
BESIDES, YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING ELSE PLANNED...
DON'T YOU?

SMAK
MIAN? YOU KNOW..?!
FIVE MILLION DD ON THE CHAMPIONS
WHUD
OH MY.. PLAYING WITH THE BIG BOYS, ARE WE?
IN THAT CASE, I THINK I'LL DROP..
FIVE MILLION ON MIAN!
THUD
WHA-?
WHAT THE-?
SKRAKK
SKRAKK

KRAKK
MIAN!!
WHU
MIAN!!
OH MAN OH MAN OH MAN!
THEY'RE STRONG...
HUH?!

OH, DAMN! THIS LOOKS BAD!!
WHRAKK
FWUDD
KRAK
WROK

MIAN'S DOWN! SHE'S PINNED!!
THUD
WHUMP
MIA OOMPH!
WHDD
WHAT'S THIS?! CHAU CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE! SHE'S ENTERED THE RING!!
!
HYAAHH!
WHRAK

KRASH!
ARE YOU OKAY, MIAN!?
CHAU?
YOU DUMB KID! YOU SHOULDN'T SHOW YOUR REAL POWER YET!
SO... YOU KNEW ALL ALONG.
OH, SURE, HON. ONE LOOK IN YOUR EYES, AND I KNEW...
SLP
WHY, YOU!!
AND HEY, ONLY THE CHAMPS..

WHAAAM!!!
I-I'M SO SORRY I TRIED TO USE YOU.
NO SWEAT! IT'S BEEN A BLAST!
GET TO MEET THE EMPRESS!

HURRAH
THEY DID IT! THEY DID IT! A NEW CHAMPION TEAM IS BORN! THE LOVELY PAIR, MIAN-CHAU! MIAN-CHAU!!
YAYY
NOT ONE GOOD LINE FOR ME THIS WHOLE ISSUE...
AARRG!
THE MONEY'S MINE! MINE, I TELL YOU!!
WHAT?! GET YOUR GRUBBY PAWS OFF MY LOOT!!
SIR! MR MAYOR?
NOW I GET IT
THEY WERE CHEAPO ANDROIDS

SHT
FWAK
W
THAT ARROGANT BITCH! SHE'LL PAY FOR THAT!
YOUR HIGHNESS! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT ?!
DON'T WORRY, LEAVE HER BE
SKRAK
TODAY, TODAY WE PLAY.
NOW--PREPARE FOR THE AWARDS CEREMONY!
YOUR MAJESTY !

AND NOW, HER MAJESTY EMPRESS SHION PRESENTS THE TRIUMPHANT DUO WITH THE BLACK KNIGHT CROSS OF THE EMPIRE...
...AND MAKES THEM GLORIOUS KNIGHTS OF HELGEBARD!
YOU'RE A STRANGE GIRL.
AM I?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, WASTING TIME HERE? I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN A HURRY.
YOU, TOO.
IF YOU REALLY WANTED TO DEFEAT ME, YOU COULD USE STRONGER ANDROIDS.
YOU COULD TAKE ME NOW, IF YOU REALLY WANTED
THOSE ANDROIDS? JUST ME HAVING SOME FUN
TODAY WAS AN INFORMAL GATHERING

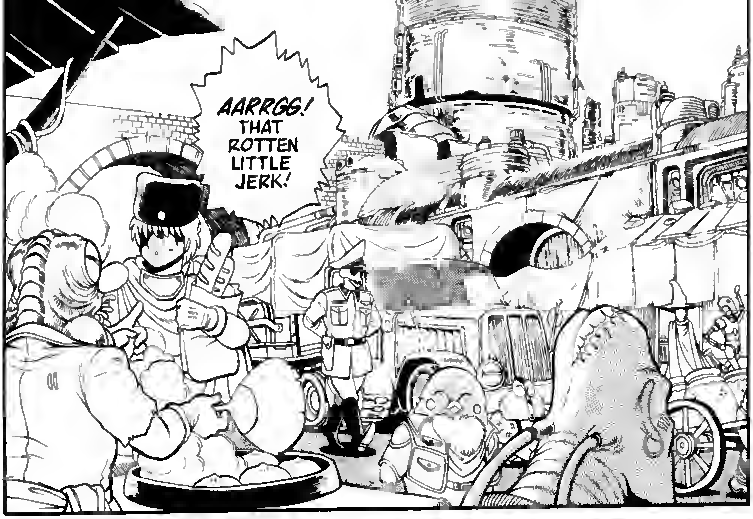
NOW THEN-- YOU MUST BE CHAU. YOU DID WELL, CHILD.
SOME PRAISE IS IN ORDER.
YOUR HIGHNESS !!

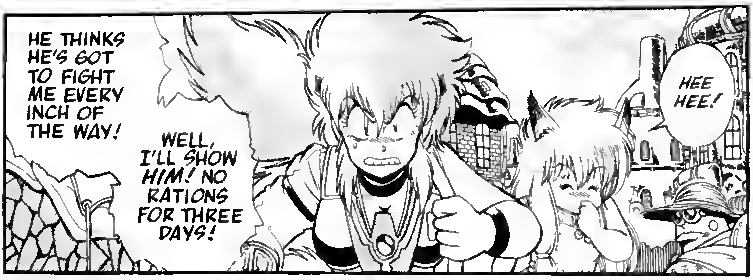
AN ASSASSIN ?
HOW AMUSING
YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN TOUCH ME WITH YOUR PATHETIC ABILITIES?

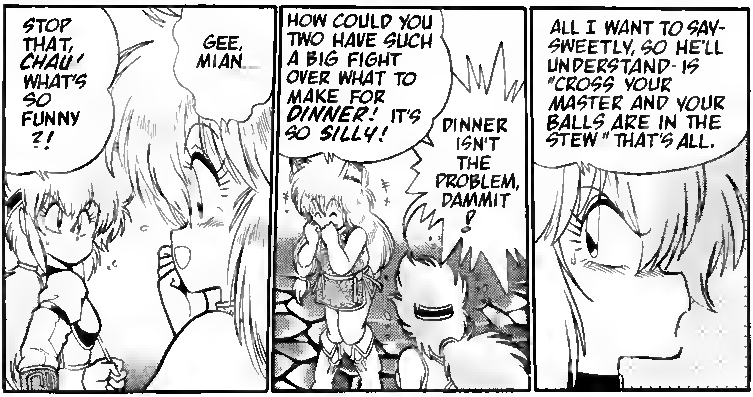
HALT !!!
BLAM BLAM
THEY HEADED THAT WAY! SEAL THE STADIUM!
DON'T LET THEM GET AWAY!
WHY DID YOU INTERFERE?! I'LL NEVER HAVE A CHANCE LIKE THAT AGAIN!
OR ARE YOU AN AGENT OF THE EMPRESS! YOU'RE ONE OF HER KIND! IS THAT IT?!
I WAS FINE!
LOOK HERE, SWEETHEART. I WASN'T PROTECTING SHION
I WAS PROTECTING YOU FROM GETTING BLOWN AWAY!

OH, FOR SURE SHE READ YOUR EVERY MOVE.
MY MONEY! MY DEAR SWEET MONEYYY !!
LOOK, I KNOW IT'S A DISAPPOINTMENT. BUT IF YOU'RE SERIOUS, THEN GET SERIOUS TRAIN, TRAIN, AND TRAIN AGAIN!
MIAN! THEN LET ME TRAIN WITH YOU! I WANT TO BE YOUR STUDENT!
EH ?
YOU'RE SO STRONG! I WANT TO BE JUST LIKE YOU! WHIP ME INTO SHAPE!
UH, SURE. NO PROBLEM. BUT ALL THE ADDED EXPENSE OF HAVING YOU ALONG...
WHAT'S GOING ON?
AW, HECK--NO SWEAT! WE'LL JUST CUT THEIR FOOD ALLOWANCE! WELCOME ABOARD!
YAHOO!!
GAAKKKK!

MIAN
IN A
BIND

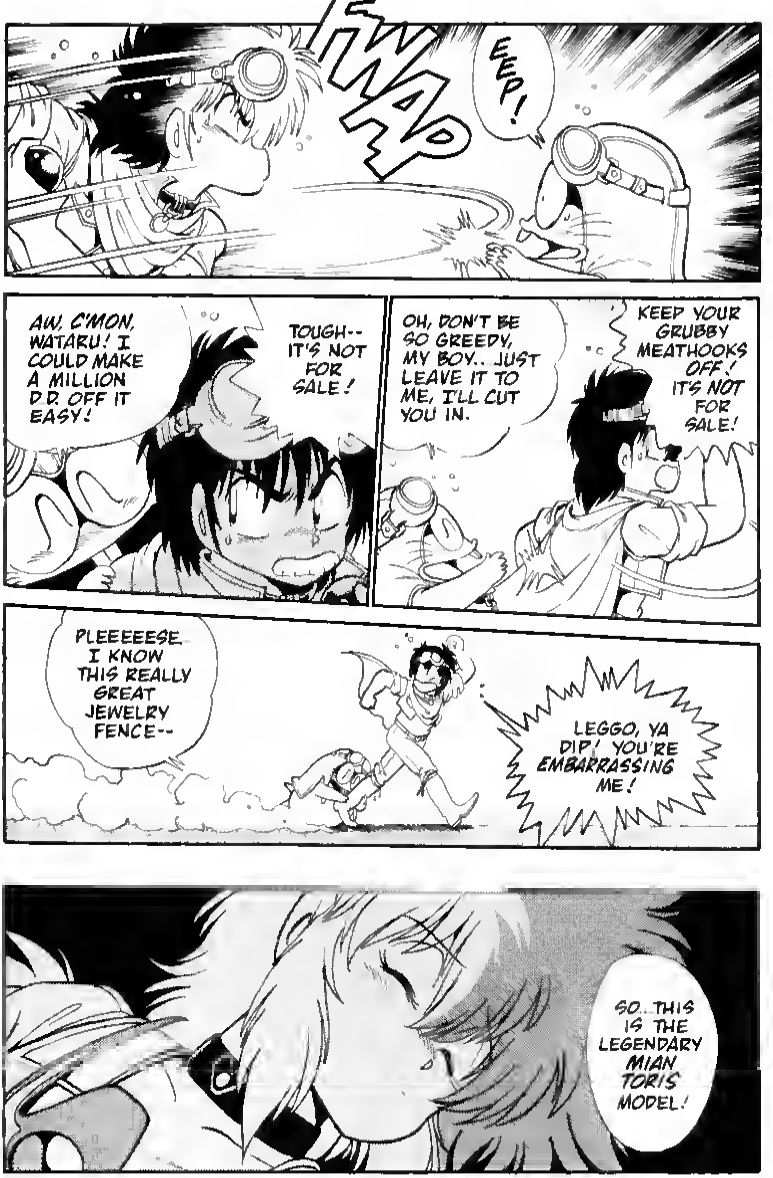

AARRGG! THAT ROTTEN LITTLE JERK!

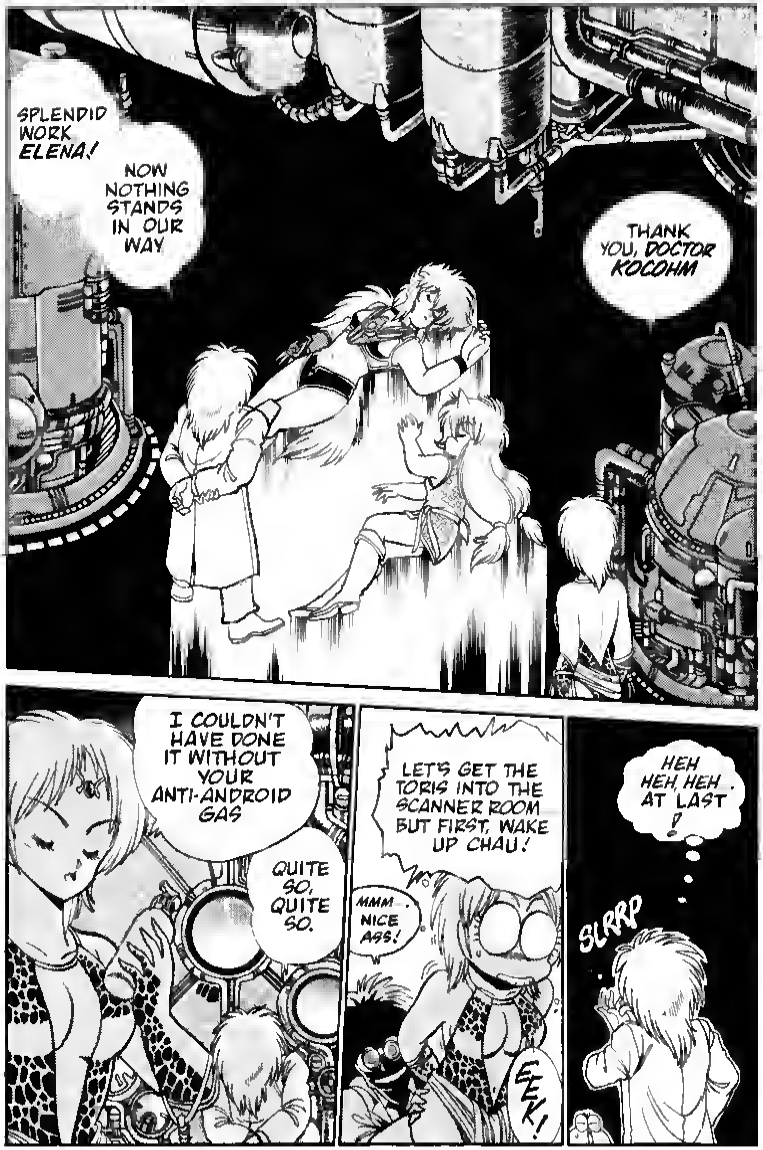

HE THINKS HE'S GOT TO FIGHT ME EVERY INCH OF THE WAY!
WELL, I'LL SHOW HIM! NO RATIONS FOR THREE DAYS!
HEE HEE!


STOP THAT, CHAU! WHAT'S SO FUNNY?!
GEE, MIAN...
HOW COULD YOU TWO HAVE SUCH A BIG FIGHT OVER WHAT TO MAKE FOR DINNER! IT'S SO SILLY!
DINNER ISN'T THE PROBLEM, DAMMIT!
ALL I WANT TO SAY- SWEETLY, SO HE'LL UNDERSTAND- IS "CROSS YOUR MASTER AND YOUR BALLS ARE IN THE STEW" THAT'S ALL.

IS THAT REALLY ALL THERE IS BETWEEN YOU AND WATARU? REEEEALY?!
DAMN RIGHT! NOTHING MORE, NOTHING LESS THAT IS IT!
BUT Y'KNOW, EVERYONE SAYS THAT THE MORE YOU LIKE SOME GUY, THE MORE YOU FIGHT, MM?
IF YOU DON'T STIFLE, I'M GONNA "LIKE" YOU UPSIDE THE HEAD!
EXCUSE ME...
BUT AREN'T YOU MIAN TORIS AND CHAU ROH?
WHO WANTS TO KNOW?! WHAT DO YOU WANT?
I'D JUST LIKE A LITTLE CHAT... WITH BOTH OF YOU..

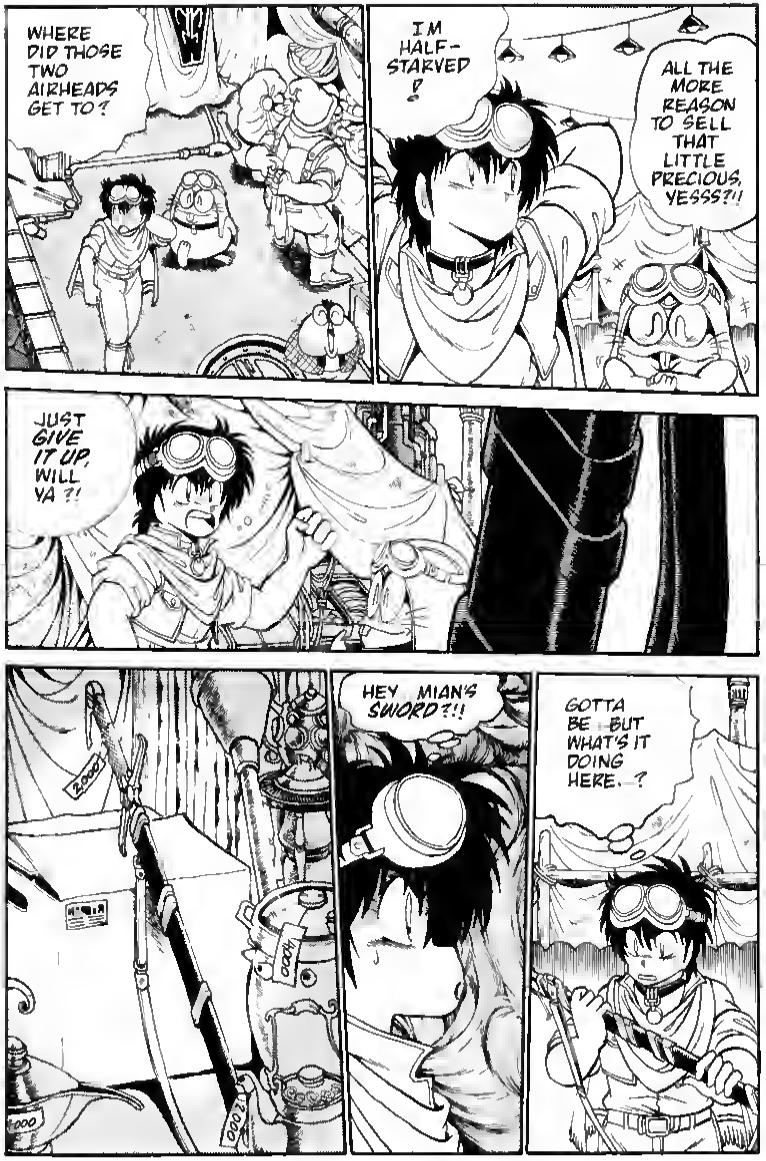
OW OW OWWW, DAMN IT!
THAT ROTTEN BROAD--ALWAYS "HIT FIRST, LISTEN TO EXCUSES LATER" SHEESH. .
YOU MEAN "BEAT TO A BLOODY PULP FIRST!"
I JUST WISH I COULD DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT TEMPER.
WISH I COULD BUY HER A FRONTAL LOBOTOMY. D
OH, WELL . ONWARD AND UPWARD. DON'T KNOW IF THIS OLD BODY'LL LAST, THOUGH...
!!
YO, WATARU! WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH THIS LITTLE PRETTY?!
HUH ?


FWAP
EEP!
AW, C'MON, WATARU! I COULD MAKE A MILLION D.D. OFF IT EASY!
TOUGH-- IT'S NOT FOR SALE!
OH, DON'T BE SO GREEDY, MY BOY.. JUST LEAVE IT TO ME, I'LL CUT YOU IN.
KEEP YOUR GRUBBY MEATHOOKS OFF! IT'S NOT FOR SALE!
PLEEEEESE. I KNOW THIS REALLY GREAT JEWELRY FENCE--
LEGGO, YA DIP! YOU'RE EMBARRASSING ME!
SO.. THIS IS THE LEGENDARY MIAN TORIS MODEL!


SPLENDID WORK ELENA!
NOW NOTHING STANDS IN OUR WAY
THANK YOU, DOCTOR KOCOHM
I COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOUR ANTI-ANDROID GAS
QUITE SO, QUITE SO.
LET'S GET THE TORIS INTO THE SCANNER ROOM BUT FIRST, WAKE UP CHAU!
MMM... NICE ASS!
EEK!
HEH HEH, HEH... AT LAST!
SLRRP

MMPH...
AAH!
WELCOME BACK
EH?! WHO ARE YOU?!
MEET MY NEW ASSISTANT, THE BEAUTIFUL AND COMPLIANT ELENA!
OH NO!
VERY CARELESS OF YOU, "CHAU ROH."
OR PERHAPS I SHOULD CALL YOU NW-1405?!

D...DOCTOR KOCOHM..
YOU FOOL! YOU IDIOT! SLINKING BACK HERE EMPTY-HANDED!
BUT WHAT.. UMMM... WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
THE CURSED IMPERIALS RAIDED OUR OLD LAB.
IF IT WASN'T FOR ELENA, I'D HAVE NEVER ESCAPED.
IF YOU HAD ASSASSINATED THE EMPRESS THE WAY YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO, I WOULDN'T BE ON THE RUN LIKE THIS!
I'M S-SORRY... I JUST WASN'T STRONG ENOUGH...
HMPH! A WEAK AND SORRY FOOL, PERHAPS..
BUT NEVER FEAR, I'LL MAKE YOU STRONGER
FOR AT LAST WE HAVE THE MOST POWERFUL ANDROID OF ALL!
SO LET US SAY YOU'VE MADE UP FOR IT.


WHERE DID THOSE TWO AIRHEADS GET TO?
I'M HALF-STARVED!
ALL THE MORE REASON TO SELL THAT LITTLE PRECIOUS, YESSS?!
JUST GIVE IT UP, WILL YA?!
ZOOM
HEY... MIAN'S SWORD?!!
GOTTA BE... BUT WHAT'S IT DOING HERE...?

YOU LIKE IT, YOUNG PRINCE? A BARGAIN AT HALF THE PRICE
YOU THIEVING LITTLE SWINE! WHERE'D YOU GET THIS?!
YEEP! SIR, I ASSURE YOU--
SHUT UP! YOU KNOW DAMN WELL THIS IS STOLEN PROPERTY!
I'LL CALL THE COPS!
PLEASE, NOT THAT, KIND SIR! YOU'LL RUIN ME!
I'LL SWEAR I DIDN'T STEAL IT-- I FOUND IT!
YOU FOUND IT?!
THIS TRUCK CAME TEARING DOWN THE ROAD, AND WHEN IT TURNED THE CORNER BY MY SHOP, THE SWORD FELL OUT THE BACK. SO I--
HEY! STOP! WATARU! WHERE'RE YOU GOING?! HEY!!

MIAN!
MIAN!
MIAAAN!!
DAMN IT ALL.. WHERE'S SHE GONE?
MIAN CAN TAKE CARE OF HERSELF, I KNOW, BUT...
HUH?!
HOLY SMOKE!! WHAT TH-?!
WHOOD

HEY! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT!
NNGG... THAT LOUSY BITCH..
A FIVE MIL D.D LEAD, AND LOOK AT ME...
I'M GONNA CROAK, BUT I'LL MAKE HER PAY..
ENOBABLE STREET, NUMBER 101
GO TELL THE IMPERIALS THE BOUNTY'S YOURS..
HHKK..
FIVE MILLION DOUBLE Ds ?!?!
OH, MAN...
BABO TO THE RESCUE !!
HANG IN THERE, PAL! DON'T--
WHOOOSH
MAN OH, MAN WONDER WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT--?
WAIT A SEC--THE IMPERIAL ARMY'S AFTER MIAN, RIGHT..?
WHAT IF...

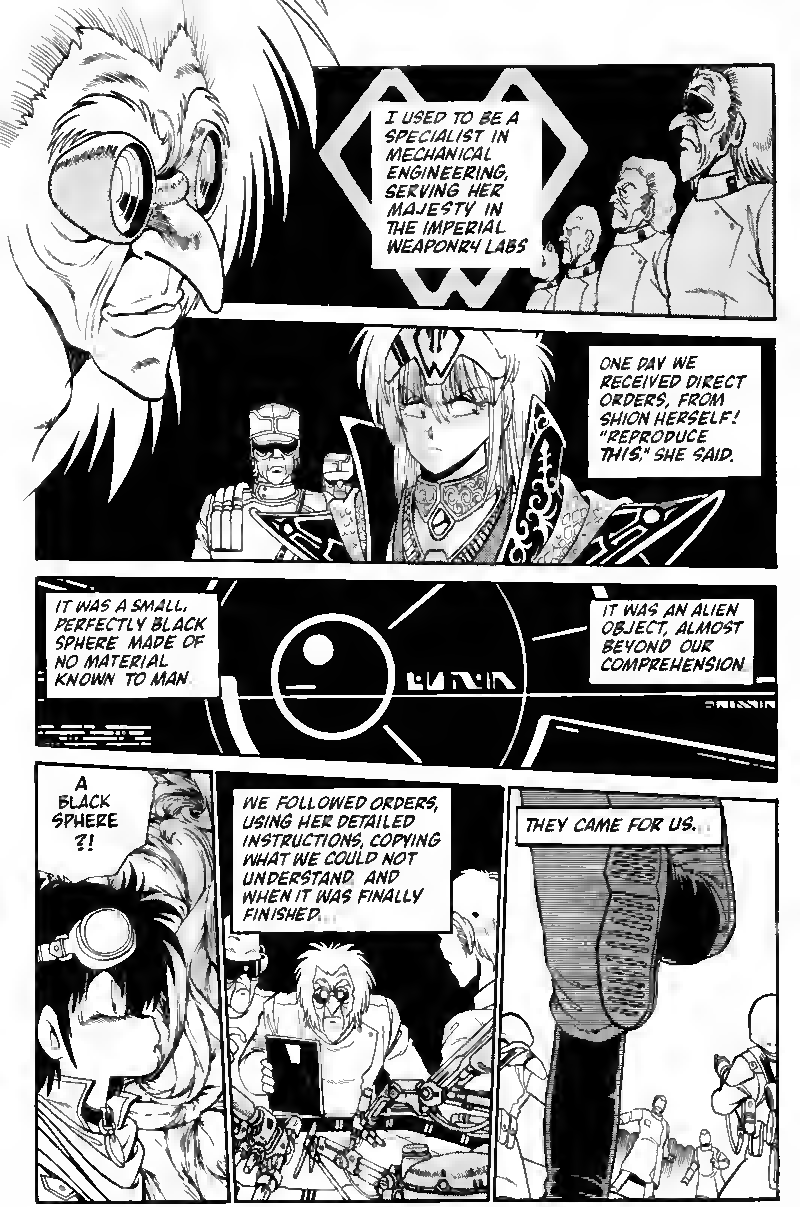
THAT MAN. YOU TOOK CARE OF HIM?
YES, DOCTOR. HE RAN, BUT NOT AS FAST AS MY KNIFE.
HE'S JUST THE FIRST... IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY SNIFF US OUT.
THEN WE SHOULD HURRY.
BUT WE FINALLY GOT THE TORIS. WE HAVE TO TEST IT, NO MATTER WHAT.
101 ENOBABLE.
MUST BE IT?
DR KOCOHM! ANOTHER INTRUDER!
WHO IS IT?!
A TEENAGE BOY, I THINK.
OH, NO! WATARU!

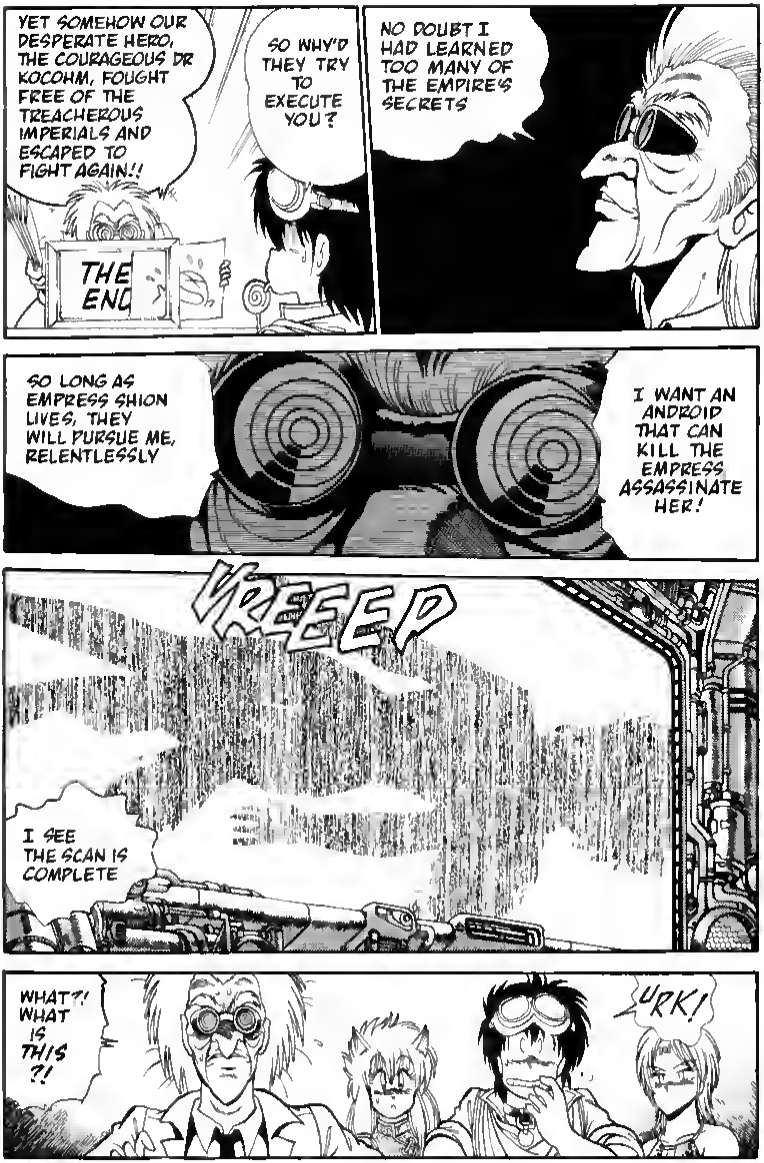
I WILL TERMINATE HIM, DOCTOR
WAIT, PLEASE! HE'S NOT WITH THE EMPIRE!!
WHAT'S THIS, CHAU? YOU KNOW HIM?
YES, SIR HIS NAME IS WATARU, ONE OF MIAN'S COMPANIONS.
IS HE NOW? IN THAT CASE, HE MIGHT ENJOY SEEING MY RESEARCH.. BEFORE HE DIES.
YEE-OUUW!
YOU'RE HURTING ME!!
WATARU!
CHAU!

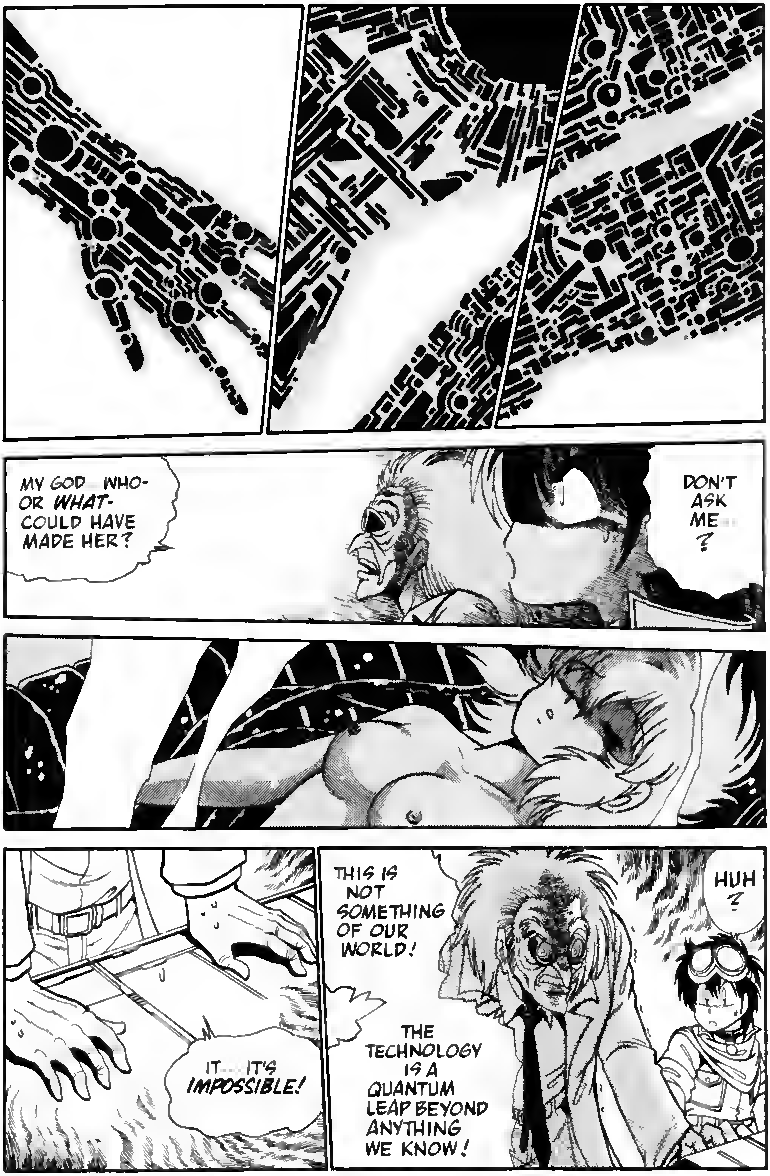
MIAN!
OH, STOP IT, BOY! I'VE SUPRESSED HER HIGHER FUNCTIONS--SHE WON'T WAKE UP.
MIAN!
MIAN!!!
BAM BAM

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? ARE YOU SOME KIND OF ROBOPHILE ?!
A "ROBOPHILE"..? HOW AMUSING. NO, YOUNG MAN, I AM A MAN OF SCIENCE.
I AM DR KOCOHM !
KOCOHM THE GENIUS! THE WORLD'S GREATEST ANDROID DESIGNER!
BULLSHIT!
WORLD'S DIRTIEST OLD MAN, MORE LIKE IT.
WHAT KINDA SICKO ARE YOU, ANYWAY!? YOU AND YOUR PILE OF SEX DOLLS!
YOU IMPUDENT LITTLE PUP! DON'T YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SEX DOLL AND A HIGH-TECH KOCOHM ANDROID?!
YOUR LITTLE FRIEND CHAU IS ONE OF MY CREATIONS!
WHAT?! YOU, CHAU? YOU'RE AN ANDROID?
PERFECT, IS SHE NOT?
LIKE ALL MY CREATIONS, A WORK OF ART! OR SO I THOUGHT...

BUT IT SEEMS I FAILED IN HER CASE SHE'S A WEAKLING! A LEMON!!
WHICH IS WHY MY NEXT LITTLE LOVELY WILL USE TECHNOLOGY FROM THE STRONGEST ANDROID OF THEM ALL
OH, DON'T GO GETTING ANY FOOLISH IDEAS
ELENA CAN STILL TIE YOU INTO KNOTS
BOOM
AND NOW, AT LAST, I WILL SEE HOW THIS GIRL IS MADE THE MOST POWERFUL ANDROID EVER BUILT!
I DON'T GET IT WHY IS THE EMPIRE TRYING TO KILL YOU?
HEH...

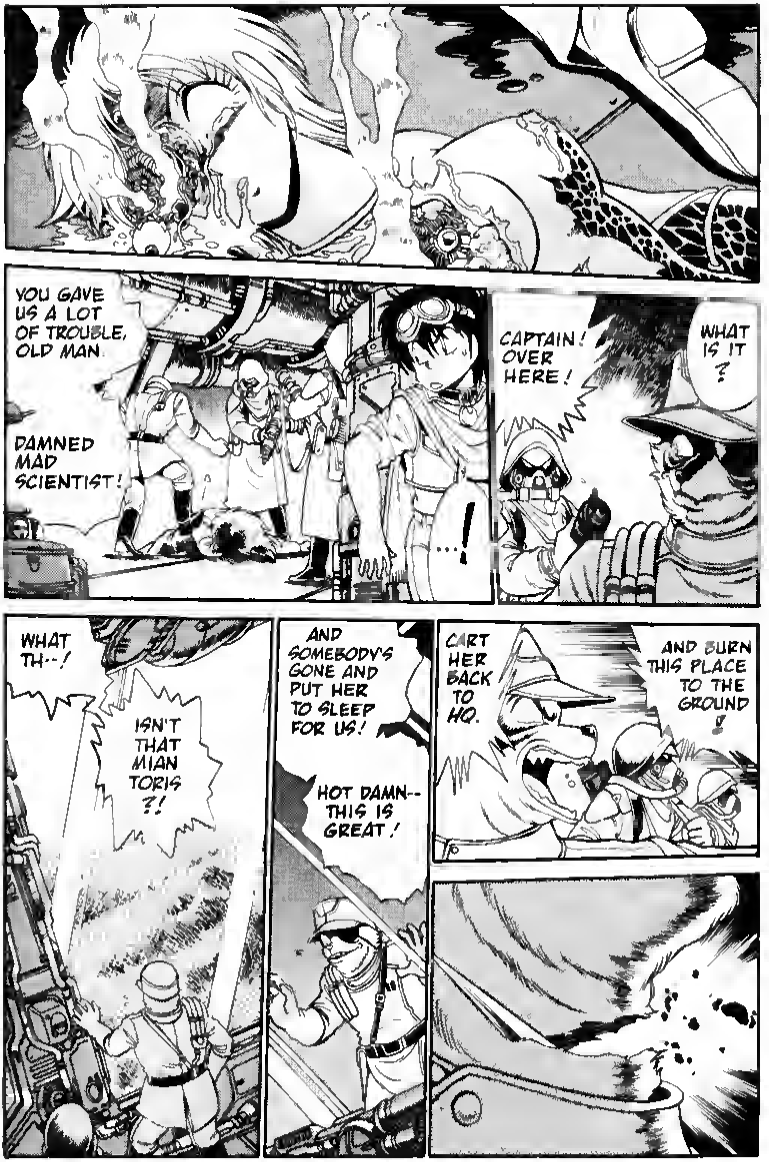

I USED TO BE A SPECIALIST IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING, SERVING HER MAJESTY IN THE IMPERIAL WEAPONRY LABS
ONE DAY WE RECEIVED DIRECT ORDERS, FROM SHION HERSELF! "REPRODUCE THIS," SHE SAID.
IT WAS A SMALL, PERFECTLY BLACK SPHERE MADE OF NO MATERIAL KNOWN TO MAN
IT WAS AN ALIEN OBJECT, ALMOST BEYOND OUR COMPREHENSION
A BLACK SPHERE ?!
WE FOLLOWED ORDERS, USING HER DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS, COPYING WHAT WE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND. AND WHEN IT WAS FINALLY FINISHED...
THEY CAME FOR US...


YET SOMEHOW OUR DESPERATE HERO, THE COURAGEOUS DR KOCOHM, FOUGHT FREE OF THE TREACHEROUS IMPERIALS AND ESCAPED TO FIGHT AGAIN!!
THE END
SO WHY'D THEY TRY TO EXECUTE YOU?
NO DOUBT I HAD LEARNED TOO MANY OF THE EMPIRE'S SECRETS
SO LONG AS EMPRESS SHION LIVES, THEY WILL PURSUE ME, RELENTLESSLY
I WANT AN ANDROID THAT CAN KILL THE EMPRESS ASSASSINATE HER!
VREEEP
I SEE THE SCAN IS COMPLETE
WHAT?! WHAT IS THIS?!
URK!


MY GOD... WHO- OR WHAT- COULD HAVE MADE HER?
DON'T ASK ME...?
IT... IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
THIS IS NOT SOMETHING OF OUR WORLD!
THE TECHNOLOGY IS A QUANTUM LEAP BEYOND ANYTHING WE KNOW!
HUH?

I MEANT TO LEARN FROM THE TORIS MODEL, LEARN WAYS TO MAKE CHAU STRONG ENOUGH TO DESTROY SHION. BUT THIS! THIS IS BEYOND EVEN MY ABILITY!
SHE'S NOT OF OUR WORLD! I CANNOT BELIEVE MEN MADE HER!!
IT'S THE SAME AS WHEN I WORKED ON THAT DAMNED SPHERE!!
GEE, YOU MEAN THIS THING?
!!
AM I GOING MAD?!
HOW DID YOU GET THAT?!
THE EMPRESS GAVE IT TO ME, GRAMPS
WHAT?! SHE WHAT?!?
YOU . . . YOU'VE MET EMPRESS SHION?!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY WOULD SHE GIVE YOU THE SPHERE? THE SPHERE I MADE...?
SHE SAID TO STICK IT INTO MIAN'S BREASTPLATE.
SO I GUESS IT'S SOME SORTA ANDROID PART, HUH?
HEY, WANT TO STICK IT IN AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS?!
FOOL! WHO KNOWS WHAT DREADFUL CONSE-QUENCES.. HMM..
DREADFUL CON--
GRASH
DON'T MOVE, KOCOHM!
BLAM BLAM BLA


YOU GAVE US A LOT OF TROUBLE, OLD MAN.
DAMNED MAD SCIENTIST!
...!
CAPTAIN! OVER HERE!
WHAT IS IT?
WHAT TH--!
ISN'T THAT MIAN TORIS?!
AND SOMEBODY'S GONE AND PUT HER TO SLEEP FOR US!
HOT DAMN-- THIS IS GREAT!
CART HER BACK TO HQ.
AND BURN THIS PLACE TO THE GROUND!

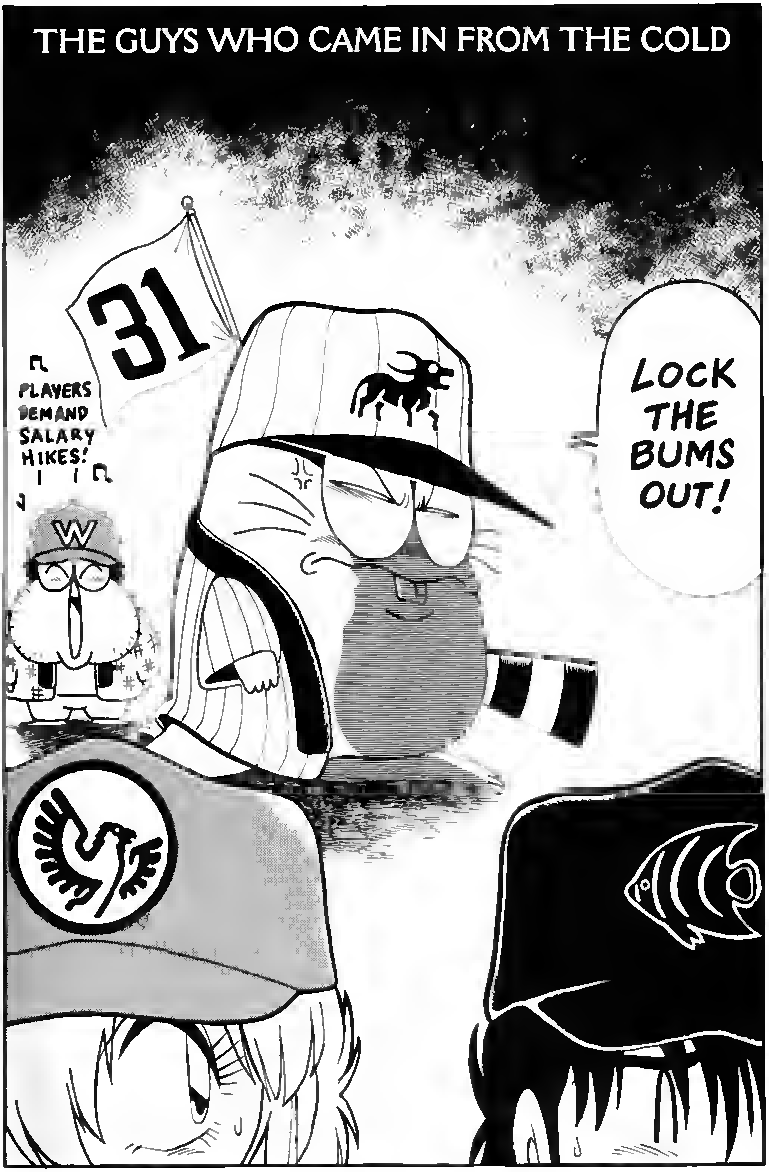
KEEP YOUR FILTHY HANDS OFF HER!
CAPTAIN!
CHAU!
WHAT THE HELL IS SHE?!
AN ANDROID? OR REAL?!
DON'T ASK QUESTIONS.. TORCH HER!

SKRAK
GYAAAH!
WHOOM
HEOW!
CHAU...

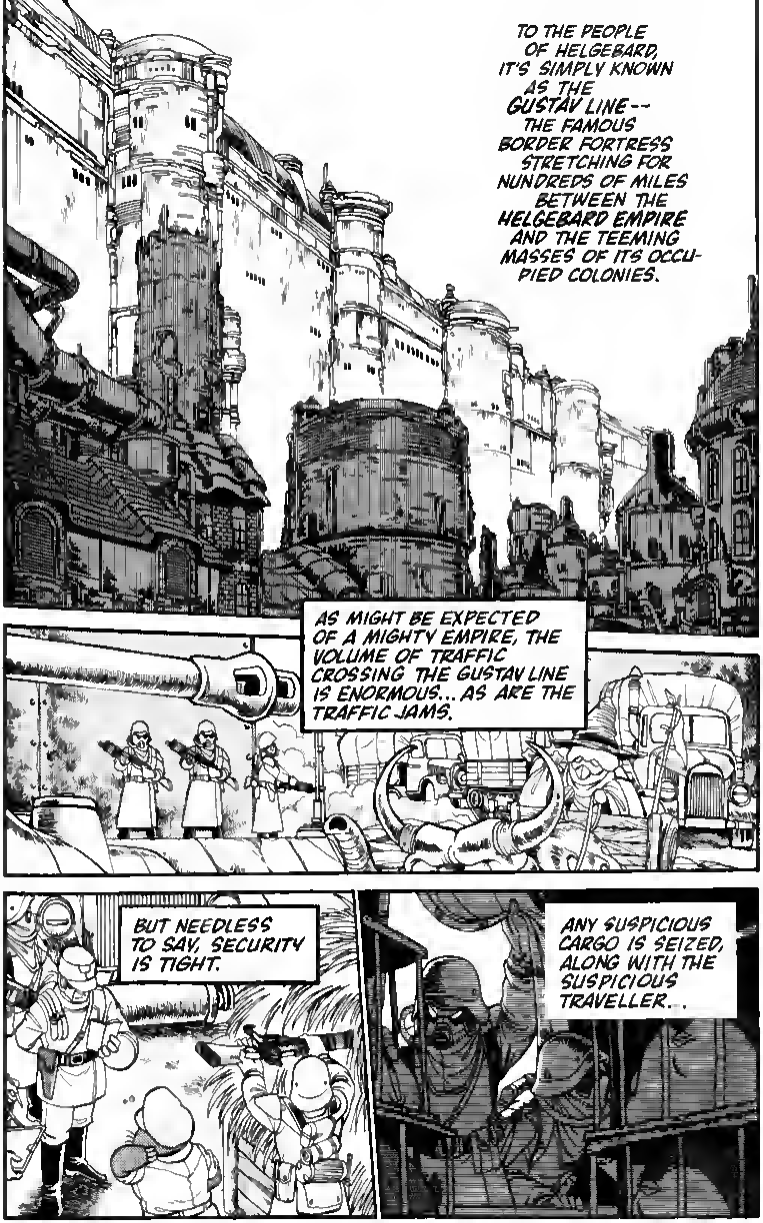
MIAN !
DAMMIT, MIAN ! WAKE UP !!
MIAN !
YOU HEAR ME, MIAN ?!
ﾅｲｽ
WHAP!

WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, YOU FILTHY PERVERT ?!!
LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE.
I NEVER DREAMED CHAU WAS AN ANDROID..
I KNEW..
BUT SHE DIDN'T HAVE TO DIE..
SO.. DID THAT DOCTOR GUY CHECK OUT MY BODY?
UH.. WELL, ER.. SORT OF, A BIT..
WHAT THE HEY?

OH, GROSS THE THOUGHT OF SOME CREEPY OLD GEEZER PAWING ME.
HEY, WAIT A SEC!!
WELL, WHAT COULD I DO, HUH? BESIDES, I WAS CURIOUS--
YOU JUST STOOD THERE GAWPING WHILE YOUR MASTER WAS HUMILIATED?!
"CURIOUS"...?! CURIOUS?!! YOU DROOLING LITTLE CREEP! I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE STRIPPED NAKED, YOU CRETIN!!
RIP RIP RIP
STOP IT! CUT IT OUT! HELLLP! SEX MANIAC!!
OH, WATA-RUUUU!!!
SHE'S GONNA STRIP ME RIGHT DOWN TO THE BONES!!
WHAT?! THE IMPERIAL OFFICER WHO CAN AUTHORIZE THE REWARD PAYMENT DIDN'T COME BACK FROM THE RAID?!
FOOL...
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR HOURS! IT'S FRAUD! CHICANERY! A FILTHY SCAM!!


THE GUYS WHO CAME IN FROM THE COLD
31
PLAYERS DEMAND SALARY HIKES!
LOCK THE BUMS OUT!

VRMMMRMM VRM
GRNGRNGRNN
HEH HEH HEH

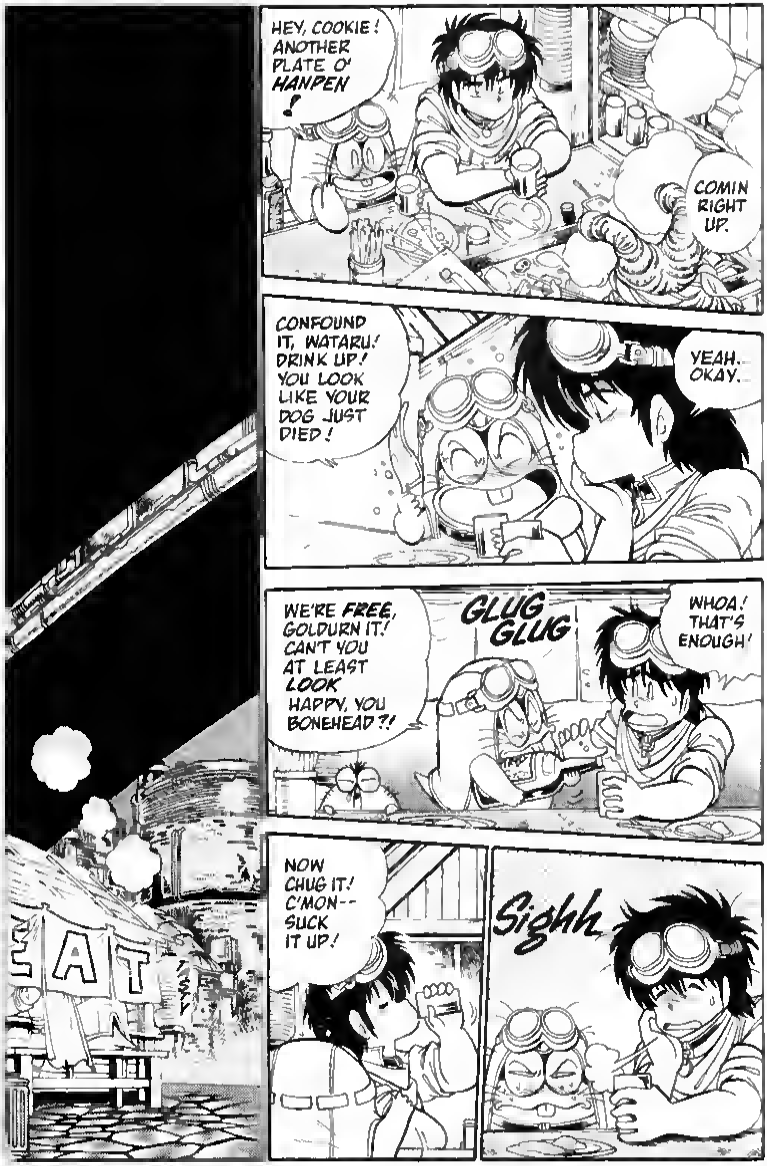

TO THE PEOPLE OF HELGEBARD, IT'S SIMPLY KNOWN AS THE GUSTAV LINE -- THE FAMOUS BORDER FORTRESS STRETCHING FOR NUNDREDS OF MILES BETWEEN THE HELGEBARD EMPIRE AND THE TEEMING MASSES OF ITS OCCUPIED COLONIES.
AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED OF A MIGHTY EMPIRE, THE VOLUME OF TRAFFIC CROSSING THE GUSTAV LINE IS ENORMOUS... AS ARE THE TRAFFIC JAMS.
BUT NEEDLESS TO SAY, SECURITY IS TIGHT.
ANY SUSPICIOUS CARGO IS SEIZED, ALONG WITH THE SUSPICIOUS TRAVELLER...

YOU WANT TO BREAK THROUGH THE LINE AND SNEAK INTO THE EMPIRE?!!
HAVE YOU GONE COMPLETELY NUTS?!! THAT'S LIKE WALKING STRAIGHT INTO PRISON AND ASKING THEM TO ARREST YOU!
THE DUMMY'S RIGHT, FOR A CHANGE! BESIDES, YOU CAN'T MAKE MONEY IN THE EMPIRE!
ANYWAY, I'M OUT NO WAY!
I'M TOO YOUNG TO DIE.
RIGHT?!?
I SEE..
HUH?
THAT'S OKAY WITH ME.
YOU TWO CAN DO WHATEVER YOU LIKE.
EH?

DAMN... THIS IS WEIRD. THAT'S NOT THE USUAL MIAN RESPONSE.
MAKES ME FEEL SORTA CREEPY
SOMETHING'S GOING ON WITH MIAN, DAMN HER
SHE JUST GETS GLOOMIER AND GLOOMIER...
SOMETIMES SHE JUST ZONES OUT, LIKE SHE'S GOT SOMETHING BIG ON HER MIND...
AND JUST A WHILE AGO, SHE LOOKED SO SAD AND LONELY...
I'VE GOT TO GO FIND HER!!
....
BLRK!
FNACK

WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?! THAT HURT!!
YOU CORK BRAIN! THIS IS OUR CHANCE, BOY!
CHANCE.. ?
YOU HEARD ME! SHE SAID WE COULD DO WHAT WE LIKE, RIGHT?!
SO THERE'S NO REASON TO GO CHASING AFTER HER.
WELL, YEAH, MAYBE SO. BUT..
NO BUTS ABOUT IT, BUB! WE ARE FREE MEN!
FINALLY, WE CAN MAKE SOME REAL MONEY!
HEY, THAT BIMBO IS BAD FOR BUSINESS.
GOTTA MAKE HAY WHILE THE SUN SHINES!
COME ON! I'LL STAND YOU A BREW! TO FREEDOM!
BUT..I REALLY OUGHT TO...
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, KID?! YOU FALLIN' IN LOVE?!
YEAH, AS IF!! WITH THAT CRAZY BITCH ROBOT?!
C'MON-- LET'S GO GET PLASTERED!!
THAT'S M'BOY

WWHSSSHHHHHH


HEY, COOKIE! ANOTHER PLATE O' HANPEN!
COMIN RIGHT UP.
CONFOUND IT, WATARU! DRINK UP! YOU LOOK LIKE YOUR DOG JUST DIED!
YEAH. OKAY.
WE'RE FREE, GOLDURN IT! CAN'T YOU AT LEAST LOOK HAPPY, YOU BONEHEAD?!
GLUG GLUG
WHOA! THAT'S ENOUGH!
NOW CHUG IT! C'MON-- SUCK IT UP!
Sighh
EAT

I GIVE UP! JUST TAKE A HIKE -- YOU'RE SPOILING MY BEER!
HEY, BABO...
WHY DO YOU THINK MIAN CHOSE NOW TO SET US FREE?
UNTIL NOW SHE'S ALWAYS DRAGGED US ALONG, KICKING AND SCREAMING.
SKSSHH
SHE EVEN SLAPPED CHOKE COLLARS ON US SO WE COULDN'T RUN AWAY
HEY, DON'T ASK ME SHE'S ONE CRAZY BROAD.
IT'S WEIRD, I TELL YOU SOMETHING'S UP
EMPRESS SHION SAID MIAN NEEDED US FOR HER MISSION SHE SAID WE'RE HER "CHOSEN COMPANIONS"
ISN'T THAT WHY SHE BROUGHT US ALL THIS WAY BY FORCE WHEN SHE HAD TO?

SOMETHING BIG IS GOING ON, IN THE SHADOWS WHERE WE LITTLE PEOPLE CAN'T SEE IT...
MIAN AND EMPRESS SHION...
PAH! FLI.
THAT BLACK SPHERE DOCTOR KOCHM MADE...MIAN'S FINAL DESTINATION...
IF I LET THAT DUMB BROAD GET AWAY FROM ME NOW...
...I'LL NEVER KNOW THE ANSWERS!
WHAD'RE Y'BLABBING 'BOUT, =HIC= Y'DAMN DRUNK!
LET'S GO, BABO!
S'GOOD IDEA, LESH HIT ANUDDER BAR..
NO, NOT THAT! MIAN! LET'S GO FIND MIAN!
GET MORE BEER

M'AN!!
LEGGO OF ME, YA CRAZY JERK!!
HEY! YOU DIDN'T PAY!
YOU OUTTA YOUR HALF-CROCKED MIND, BOY?! WHY DO YOU WANT TO GO BACK TO THAT PSYCHO CHICK?!
HEY, PAL...
COME ON, BABO! STICK WITH ME, OKAY?!
LOOK, JUST DO THIS AND THE DRINKS ARE ON ME FOR A MONTH, OKAY...?
WHEN BABO SAY "FORGET IT" BABO MEAN "FORGET IT"-- GET IT?!
I SEE, I SEE... YOU'D RATHER BE WITH SOME GIRLIE THAN BE A FREE MAN, EH?
IT'S NOT THAT, I'M TELLING YOU!
ME, I'D RATHER BE WITH MONEY.
GOT MONEY, BUY GIRL. HMM?
IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU THINK, THEN WE'RE THROUGH, YOU CHEAP BLOB!
OH YEAH?! WELL, GOOD RIDDANCE, YA' P-WHIPPED BRAT!!

DAMN HER TAIL, ANYWAY... WHERE'D SHE GET TO?
I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE'S CROSSED THE BORDER ALREADY.
STILL. IT'S SO QUIET.
WHEN SHE'S AROUND THERE'S ALWAYS FIGHTING SOMEWHERE..
DAMN IT ALL, ANYWAY!

MIAAAN!
!!
MIAN! SO THIS IS WHERE YOU WERE HIDING!
WATARU!

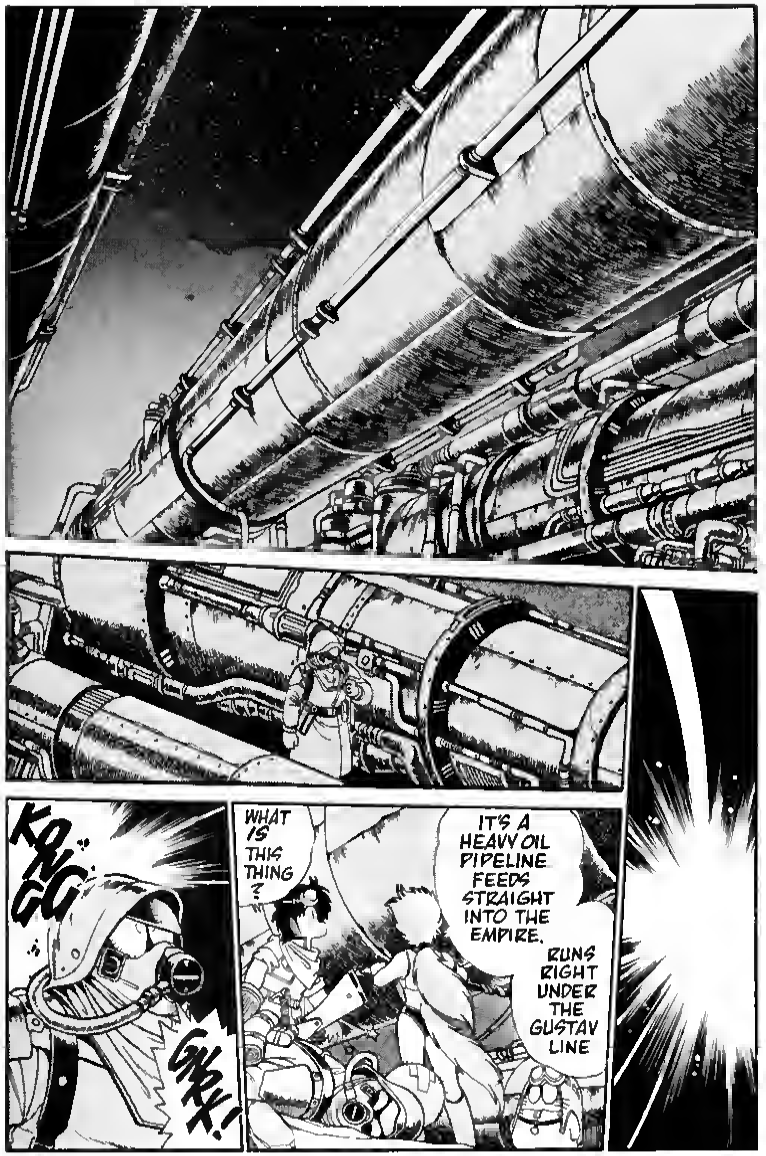
I LOOKED ALL OVER FOR YOU...
huhh
hahh
I'M GOING WITH YOU!
huhh
ACROSS THE GUSTAV LINE!
hahh
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO REGRET IT?
LOOK! WE'VE COME THIS FAR TOGETHER, RIGHT?! I'M STICKING WITH YOU TO THE END!
BUT MIAN, I JUST WANT TO KNOW ONE THING...
WHERE IS IT EXACTLY THAT YOU'RE GOING?
...
I FIGURE YOU'VE GOT A PRETTY GOOD IDEA ALREADY, DON'T YOU?

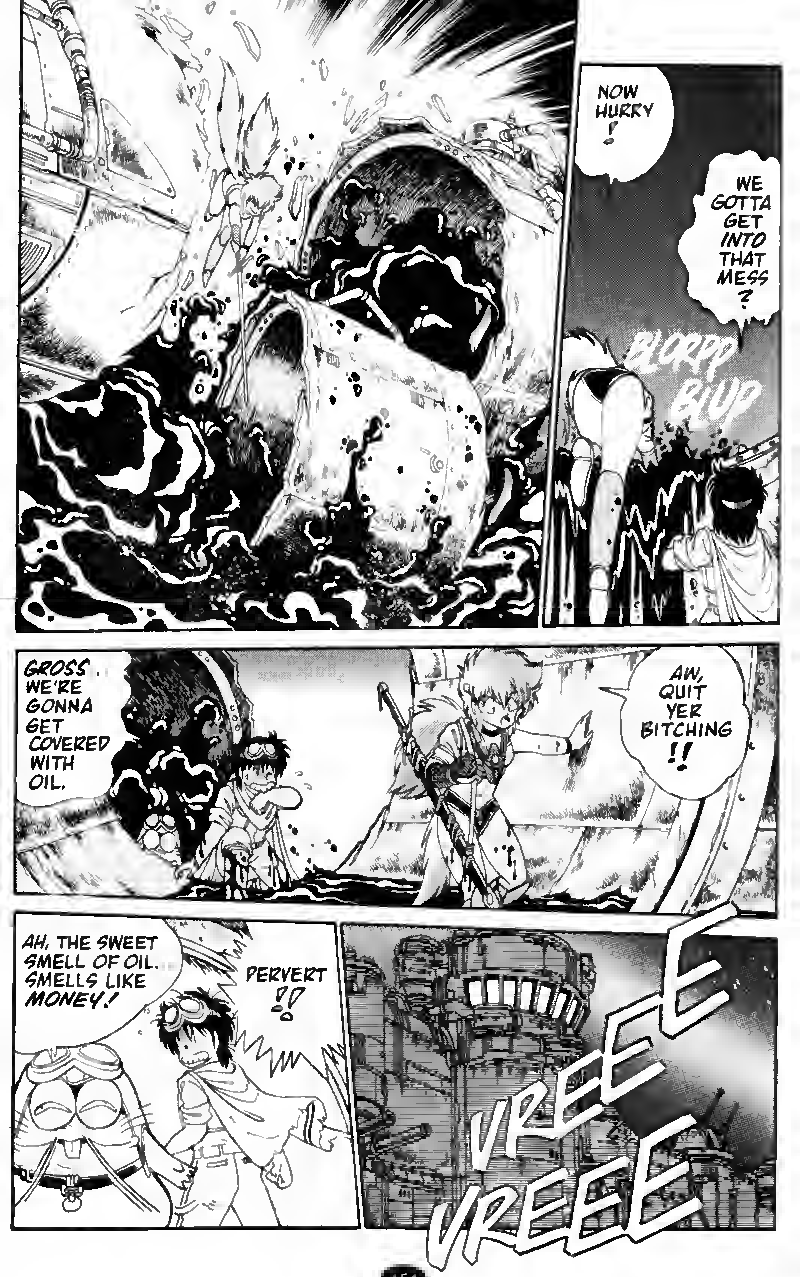
KYURAWEIL, THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL, RIGHT?
EMPRESS SHION'S FORTRESS CITY...
YOU GOT IT!
SHION'S CASTLE IT IS... KYURAWEIL KEEP!
THAT'S OUR ULTIMATE DESTINATION.
KYURAWEIL KEEP...

BUT WHY THE HELL DO YOU WANT TO GO THERE ?!
JUST WHAT IS IT BETWEEN YOU AND SHION ?!
I'LL TELL YOU IN GOOD TIME, I PROMISE.
REALLY...? YOU PROMISE..?
BUT YOU KNOW, FROM NOW ON THINGS ARE REALLY GOING TO GET HAIRY.
I COULDN'T JUST DRAG YOU ALONG...
GEE, YOU ACTUALLY WORRIED ABOUT US ?!
WELL, ER, SURE--ANY GOOD MASTER WOULD...
HEY, NO SWEAT, DEARIE! ME AND BABO, WE THRIVE ON TROUBLE.
NYA HA HA HA !
FORGIVE ME, WATARU.. THAT'S NOT ALL THERE IS... ONCE WE REACH KYURAWEIL KEEP, YOU.. YOU'RE GOING TO...

NOW WHAT'S BUGGING YOU?
ULP!
DON'T BE S-SILLY! IT'S NOTHING.
YOU WORRY TOO MUCH, BOY!
ANYWAY, JUST TRUST ME I'LL DO RIGHT BY YOU.
OH, YEAH?
I SAID TRUST ME!!
I TRUST, I TRUST!
GREAT! A MASTER COULDN'T ASK FOR A BETTER SERVANT THAN YOU! THIS'LL BE A BLAST!
"SERVANT"...?
WHAP
YEAH SO DON'T GO GETTING ANY BIG IDEAS!
YES'M, YES'M.

OKAY-- LET'S GO!
I'M READY AND WILLING, BUT BABO.
BABO'S NOT COMING?
NO, THE LITTLE SKUNK--
WATARU! WATARU, OLD BUDDY! TAKE ME WITH YOU!
DID YOU STIFF ANOTHER BARTENDER?!
YOU KNOW ME.. WHEN I DRINK TOO MUCH, MY FEET JUST DO THE WALKING.
JEEZ, YOU SMELL LIKE A BREWERY!
FORGIVE ME, SWEET MASTER I'LL HOLD MY BREATH
ANYWAY, WE GOTTA MOVE IT! THE CRAZY OLD COOT'S GOT A BUTCHER KNIFE!
HERE WE GO AGAIN...


KONG
GRK!
WHAT IS THIS THING?
IT'S A HEAVY OIL PIPELINE. FEEDS STRAIGHT INTO THE EMPIRE. RUNS RIGHT UNDER THE GUSTAV LINE


NOW HURRY!
WE GOTTA GET INTO THAT MESS?
BLORP BLUP
GROSS. WE'RE GONNA GET COVERED WITH OIL.
AW, QUIT YER BITCHING!!
AH, THE SWEET SMELL OF OIL. SMELLS LIKE MONEY!
PERVERT!?
VREEE VREEE

WHAT SET OFF THE ALARM?!
LOOKS LIKE GUERRILLAS, SIR! CRUDE OIL PIPELINE ZIY HAS BEEN SEVERED!
WHAT?!
ALL FORCES! RED ALERT, RED ALERT!
SECTOR 17 GUARD UNITS, INVESTIGATE THE PIPELINE, AND EXTERMINATE ALL RADICAL ELEMENTS!
VREEE VREEE VREEE
UH OH, IT SOUNDS A LITTLE NOISY OUT THERE, DON'TCHA THINK?
THEY'VE FOUND US-- MOVE YOUR ASS!
HEY! W-WAIT UP!
SIR, IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE SABOTAGE! THE UNITS ON THE GROUND THINK SOMEONE'S BROKEN INTO THE PIPELINE!
ALL RIGHT, THEN! SEND A UNIT TO INTERCEPT THEM INSIDE!

REMEMBER, DON'T USE YOUR GUNS OR YOU'LL BLOW US ALL TO KINGDOM COME!
GEE, MIAN AREN'T WE PAST THE GUSTAV LINE YET?
I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT. IT SHOULD BE THE OTHER SIDE BY--
!!
YAAH!!

GET BACK!
THK
SLIP
!!

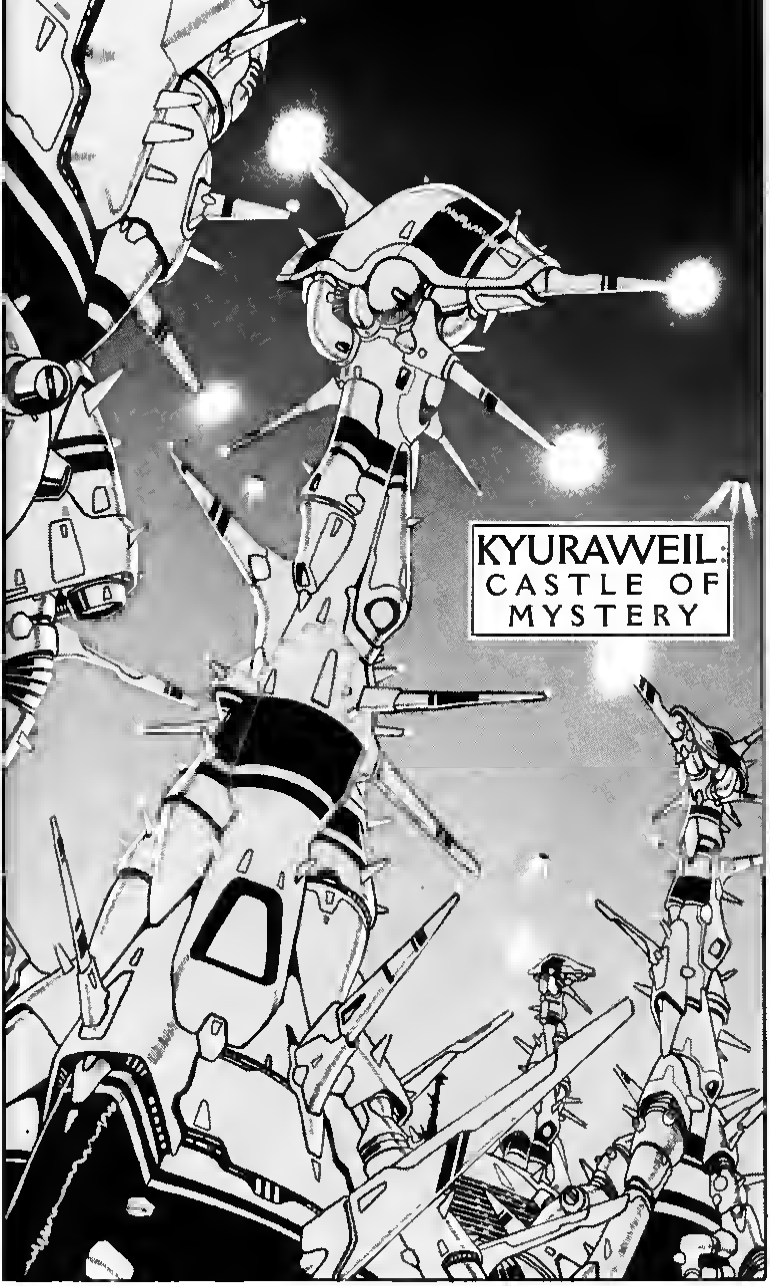
HEH, HEH...
EEE YUCK!!!
GYA HA HA! WHAT A SCREAM!
NGRR...
WHAT ARE YOU LAUGHING AT!!
GRURK
DIE!!!!
KANGG
WHONG
WHRANG

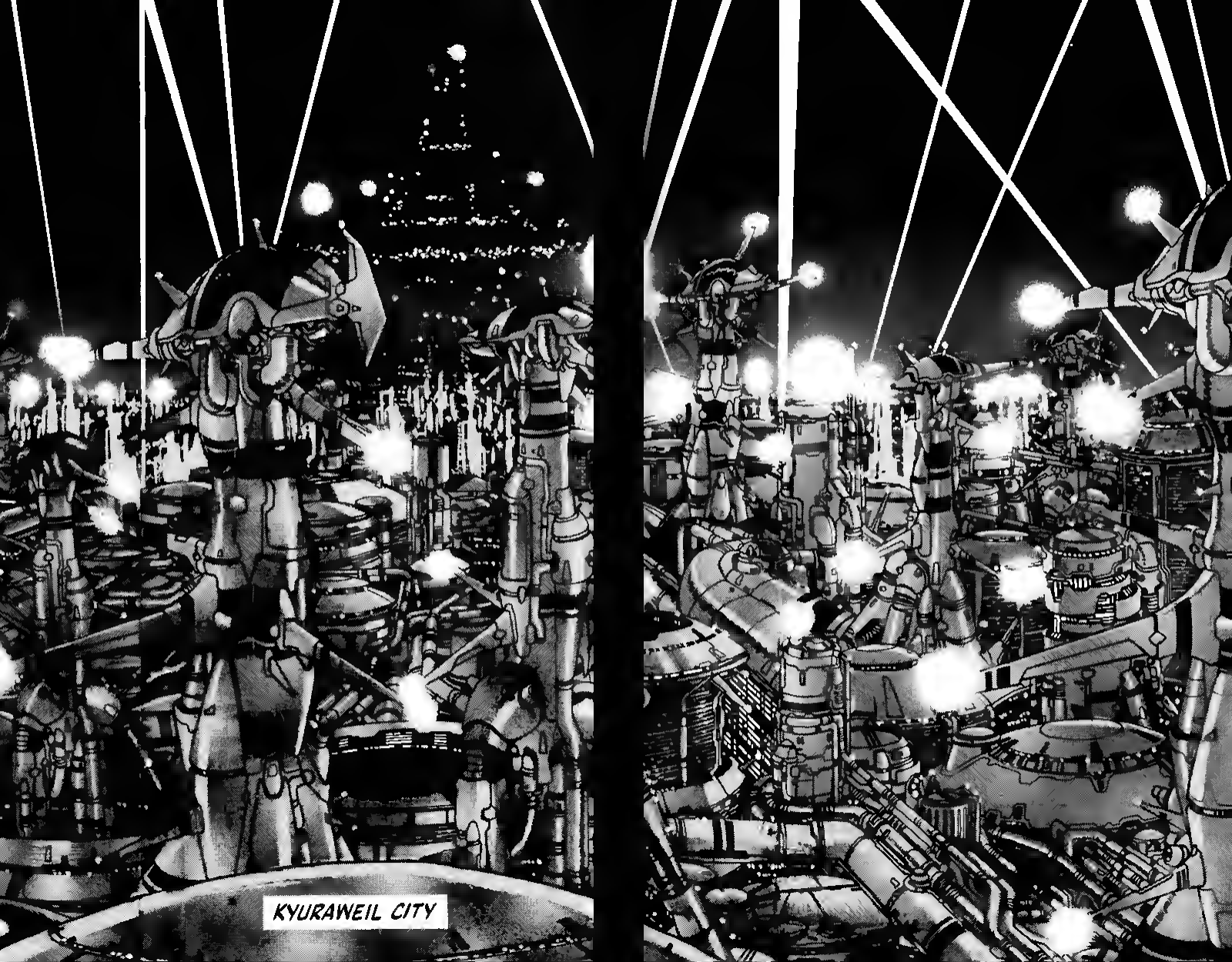
ENOUGH OF THIS!
BURN THEM ALL!
FWOOSH
WHOOSH
WHOOM
!!

YAIEEE!!!
MIAN! WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT!!
NO KIDDING!
WHRANGG
WHROOSH
YOW!

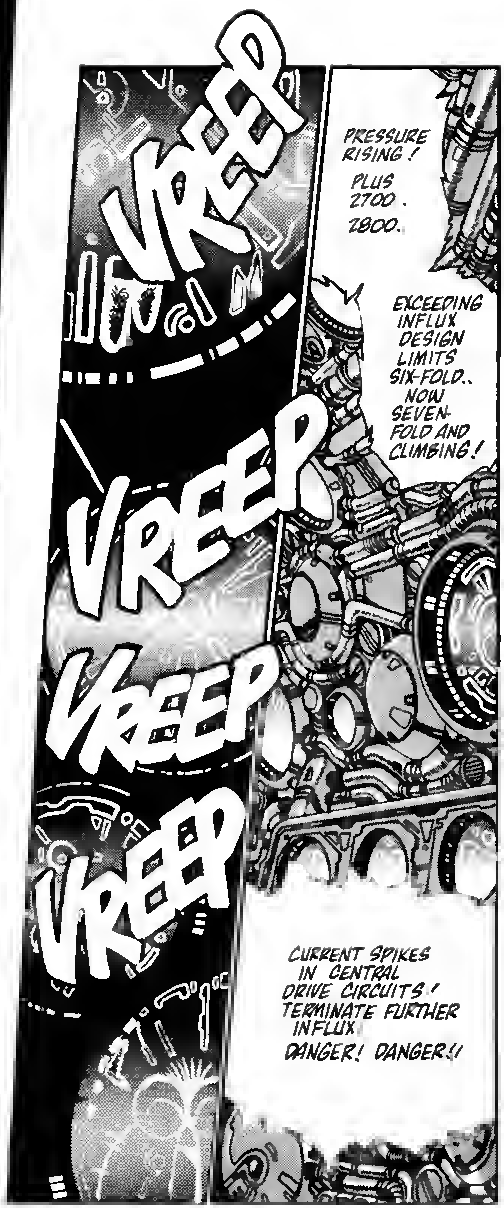
RMBBRMBBRMBB
RUN, RUN, RUN!!
BR.T.T
BLAM
BLAM
BUDDABUDDA
BKOOM
AIEE!

OH, GREAT-- IT WON'T COME OFF.
HEY, MIAAAN, CAN I SCRUB YOUR BACK?
CAN I SCRUB YOUR FRONT!
I SAID DON'T LOOK!
WHOOK!
JEEZ.. CHEER HER UP, AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS?
IDIOTS!!
I TOLD YA!


KYURAWEIL:
CASTLE OF
MYSTERY


KYURAWEIL CITY

KYURAIWEIL KEEP


VREEP
PRESSURE RISING! PLUS 2700. 2800.
EXCEEDING INFLUX DESIGN LIMITS SIX-FOLD.. NOW SEVEN-FOLD AND CLIMBING!
VREEP
VREEP
VREEP
CURRENT SPIKES IN CENTRAL DRIVE CIRCUITS! TERMINATE FURTHER INFLUX!
DANGER! DANGER!!

EXCEEDING DESIGN MAXIMUM! DANGER! DANGER!
OVERRIDE LIMITS! RAISE THE PRESSURE!
SHREEEEEEEE
WILL IT..?!

SHSSSSSSSSS
ANOTHER FAILURE..
I CAN'T STABILIZE THE SYSTEM ALONE
MIAN..
I MUST HAVE YOU HERE !!
I WILL HAVE YOU DRAGGED BEFORE ME, WHATEVER IT TAKES

YOUR MAJESTY!
FORGIVE ME, YOUR MAJESTY I HAVE UNFORTUNATE NEWS...
WHAT IS IT, KESSELRING?
WE HAVE JUST RECEIVED A REPORT FROM FRONTIER COMMAND
MIAN TORIS AND HER COMPANIONS HAVE BREACHED THE BORDER AND ENTERED IMPERIAL TERRITORY
SO...
SHE HAS COME AT LAST.

YOUR MAJESTY.. FORGIVE ME..
I CRAVE PERMISSION TO ASK ONE QUESTION
YES, GENERAL ?
WHY IS YOUR MAJESTY SO PREOCCUPIED WITH THIS ONE GIRL ?
THE GENERAL STAFF AND OUR TROOPS CANNOT UNDERSTAND
PERHAPS SHE IS UNUSUALLY STRONG, BUT SHE IS STILL JUST A LONE FEMALE THERE IS NOTHING TO FEAR--
HNNGH!
AAAGH!!

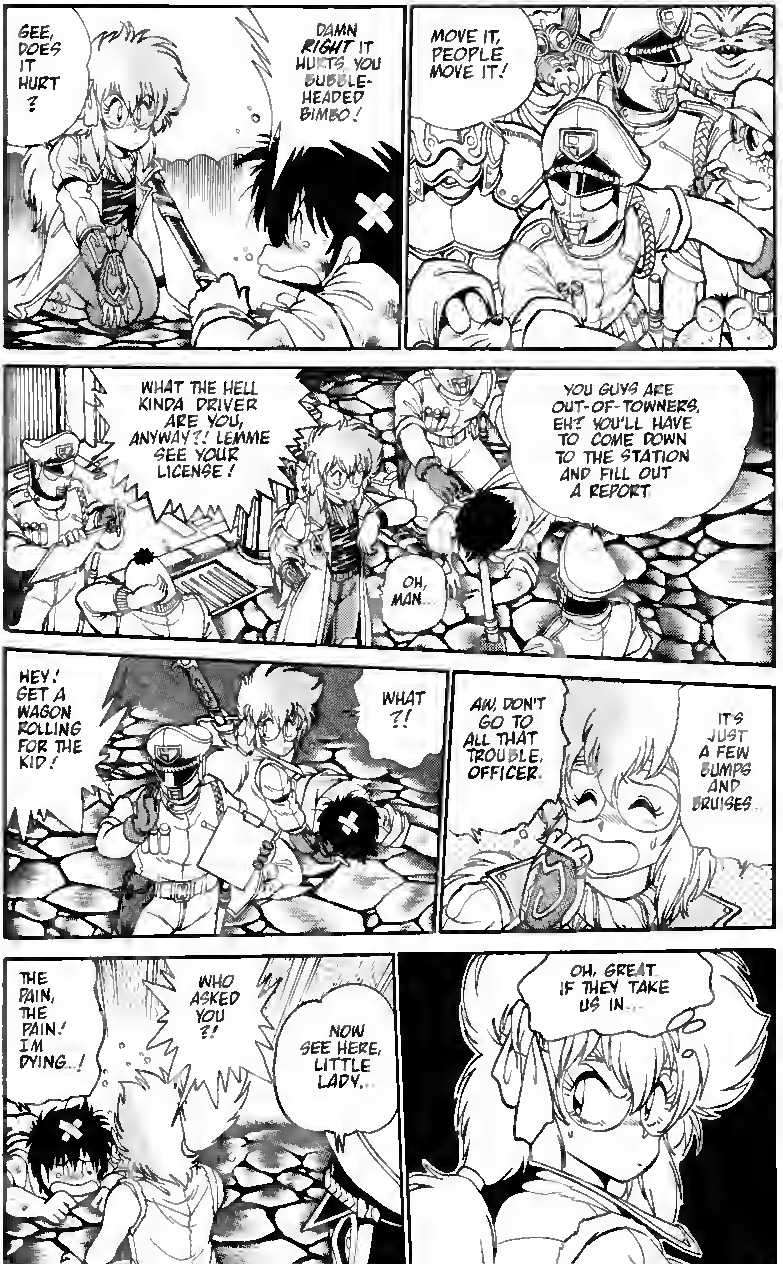
Y-YOUR MAJESTY... FORGIVE ME...
I-I ONLY...
KESSELRING
IN YOUR LOYALTY TO ME YOU HAVE BEEN A MODEL OF DEVOTION... UNTIL NOW.
YOU MAY CONTINUE TO OBEY MY COMMANDS FROM THIS DAY FORWARD-- WITHOUT QUESTION!
OF OF COURSE...
I I DREAM OF NOTHING MORE THAN TO FAITHFULLY DEVOTE MY LIFE TO YOUR MAJESTY, FOREVER...
WHUB
GET OUT!
YOUR MAJESTY.. MERCY FORGIVE MY IMPERTINENCE

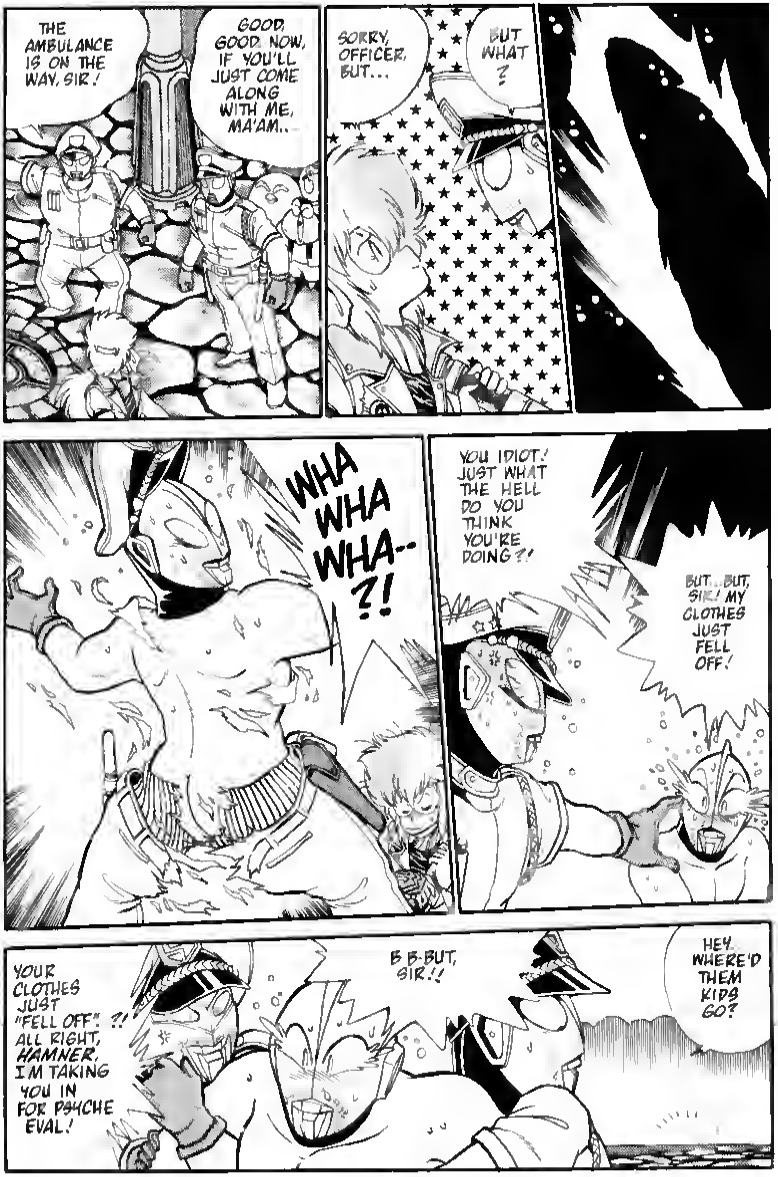
MIAN DO COME COME TO MY CASTLE, MY DEAR.
TRY AS YOU MIGHT, YOU CAN NEVER ESCAPE OUR COMMON DESTINY.

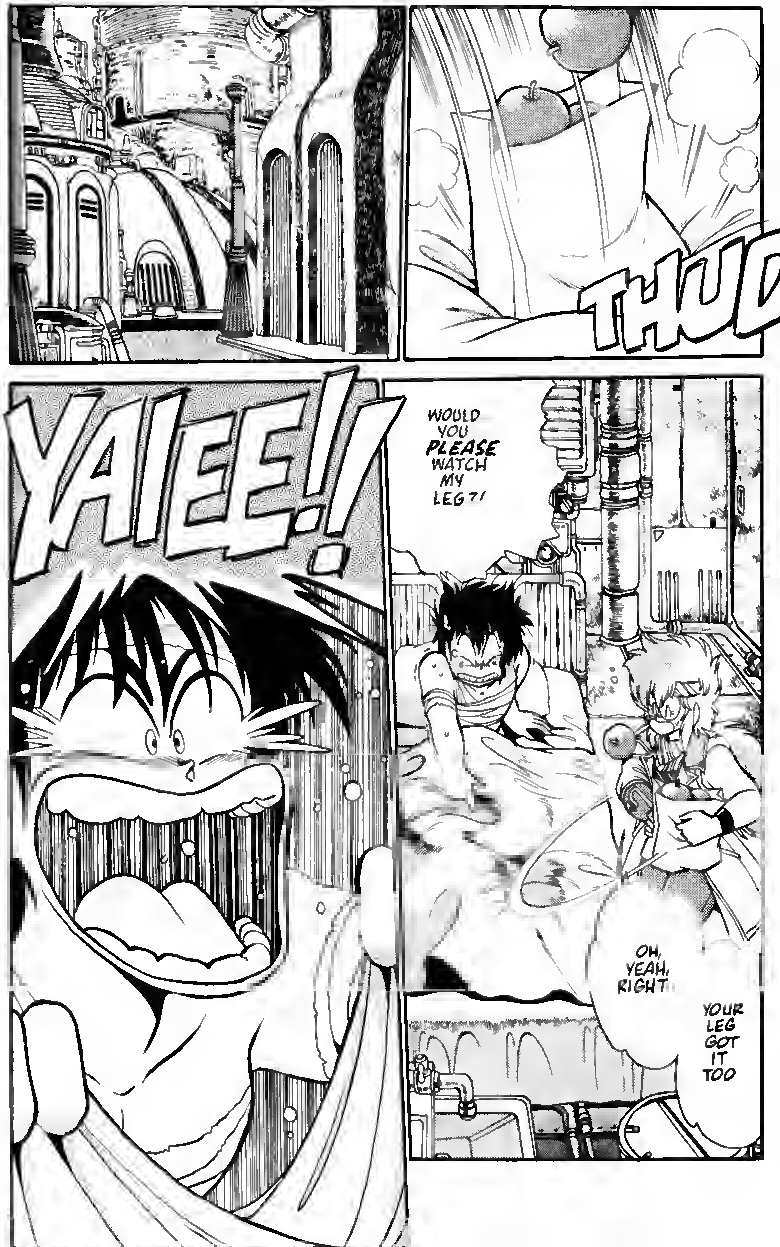
WOW, GUESS THIS REALLY IS ENEMY TERRITORY, HUH? THEY GOT OUR MUGS PLASTERED ALL OVER THE PLACE
WAIT UP, YOU GUYS!
NOW WHAT IS IT, BABO?
I REFUSE TO WEAR THIS STUPID DISGUISE!
I WANT SOMETHING THAT SETS OFF MY NATURAL GOOD LOOKS!
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? THOSE LOOK PERFECT ON YOU

NOW THIS IS FASHION!!
HMPH!
LOOK HERE, BLOB... WE'RE INSIDE THE EMPIRE NOW. WE'VE GOT TO BE DOUBLE CAREFUL.
SHE'S RIGHT, BABO. THAT'S WHY WE'RE WEARING THESE DISGUISES IN THE FIRST PLACE.
EH?
SOME IDIOT SPOTS US, WE JUST HAVE MIAN SLICE 'N' DICE HIM!
CHOP CHOP!
WHY ME...
LISTEN UP. I'M IN A HURRY, SEE!
THERE'S NO POINT STIRRING UP TROUBLE, GETTING INTO FIGHTS...
OH... OF COURSE AND WHO IS IT WHO ALWAYS GETS US INTO FIGHTS, EH, MIAN?
NGRR
SOUNDS LIKE HER RECHARGE PERIOD EH, WATARU?!
YEAH... SHE STARTS GETTING SWORD-HAPPY ABOUT THREE DAYS BEFORE IT STARTS.
WHAT WAS THAT, YOU TWO?!
AND THEN SHE TAKES IT OUT ON US!

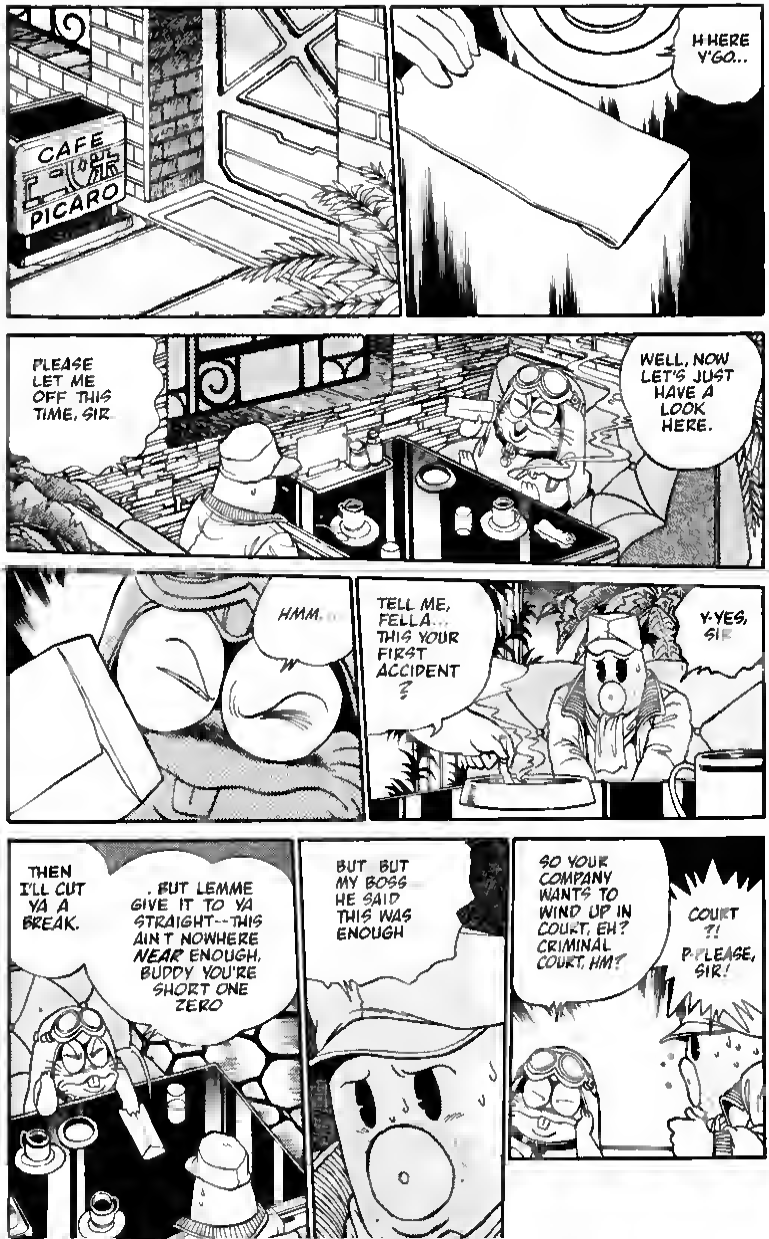
OWW! STOP IT! MIA-
HONK
GWURK!
SPLAKK
OH, NO
WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU DOING, BOY?
AS IF IT WAS SUCH A MYSTERY


GEE, DOES IT HURT ?
DAMN RIGHT IT HURTS YOU BUBBLE-HEADED BIMBO!
MOVE IT, PEOPLE MOVE IT!
WHAT THE HELL KINDA DRIVER ARE YOU, ANYWAY?! LEMME SEE YOUR LICENSE!
OH, MAN...
YOU GUYS ARE OUT-OF-TOWNERS, EH? YOU'LL HAVE TO COME DOWN TO THE STATION AND FILL OUT A REPORT.
HEY! GET A WAGON ROLLING FOR THE KID!
WHAT ?!
AW, DON'T GO TO ALL THAT TROUBLE, OFFICER.
IT'S JUST A FEW BUMPS AND BRUISES.
THE PAIN, THE PAIN! I'M DYING...!
WHO ASKED YOU ?!
NOW SEE HERE, LITTLE LADY...
OH, GREAT IF THEY TAKE US IN...


THE AMBULANCE IS ON THE WAY, SIR!
GOOD, GOOD. NOW, IF YOU'LL JUST COME ALONG WITH ME, MA'AM..
SORRY, OFFICER, BUT...
BUT WHAT ?
WHA WHA WHA--?!
YOU IDIOT! JUST WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
BUT...BUT, SIR! MY CLOTHES JUST FELL OFF!
YOUR CLOTHES JUST "FELL OFF"?! ALL RIGHT, HAMNER, I'M TAKING YOU IN FOR PSYCHE EVAL!
B-B-BUT, SIR!!
HEY, WHERE'D THEM KIDS GO?


THUD
WOULD YOU PLEASE WATCH MY LEG?!
OH, YEAH, RIGHT.
YOUR LEG GOT IT TOO
YAIEE!!

LOOK, I'M GETTING SICK OF YOUR WHINING GEEZ, YOU ONLY GOT RUN OVER BY A TRUCK!
AW, SHUDDUP! YOU THROW ON A COUPLE LOUSY BANDAGES
...AND DUMP ME IN SOME FLEABAG HOTEL! I COULD'A CROAKED FOR ALL YOU CARE!
SO WHAT WAS I SUPPOSED TO DO? FEGISTER YOU IN A PUBLIC HOSPITAL?
AHHH, YES! SWEET WHITE ANGELS OF TENDER MERCY, GENTLE HOT NURSE BABES
OOH, LET ME TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING!
SO SORRY I'M NOT A "SWEET-WHITE-ANGEL-OF-MERCY-GENTLE-HOT-NURSE BABE," JERK!
NOT HALF AS SORRY AS I AM!!


CAFE
PICARO
H HERE Y'GO...
PLEASE LET ME OFF THIS TIME, SIR.
WELL, NOW LET'S JUST HAVE A LOOK HERE.
HMM...
TELL ME, FELLA... THIS YOUR FIRST ACCIDENT ?
Y-YES, SIR.
THEN I'LL CUT YA A BREAK.
. BUT LEMME GIVE IT TO YA STRAIGHT--THIS AIN'T NOWHERE NEAR ENOUGH, BUDDY YOU'RE SHORT ONE ZERO
BUT BUT MY BOSS HE SAID THIS WAS ENOUGH
SO YOUR COMPANY WANTS TO WIND UP IN COURT, EH? CRIMINAL COURT, HM?
COURT ?!
P-PLEASE, SIR!

OKAY--I... I UNDERSTAND I'LL GO TALK TO MY BOSS
GO AHEAD, TALK AWAY
'CAUSE AT TIMES LIKE THIS, IT'S SINCERITY THAT COUNTS, BUDDY-- GET IT?
YYESSIR
LOTS OF FOLDING, GREEN SINCERITY TELL YOUR BOSS THAT
SLRRRRRP
SIR, I'M S-SORRY, SIR, BUT MY C-COMPANY SAID THIS WOULD HAVE TO DO...
MAYBE FOR THEM, SURE. BUT YOU'RE ACTUALLY THE ONE WHO'S PAYING, SEE?
B-BUT, KIND SIR... I HAVE THE MORTGAGE ON THE HOUSE...
AND I GOT FOUR LITTLE KIDS, THE OLDEST IS FIVE, AND MY YOUNGEST ONLY JUST BORN...
SO...WOULDN'T WANT TO BREAK THEIR LITTLE ORPHAN HEARTS NOW, WOULD YOU, PAPA?
.....

I-I...
LOOK-- JUST HOW BADLY HURT IS YOUR FRIEND, SIR?
DEATH'S DOOR, KIDDO. MULTIPLE COMPOUND FRACTURES EXPLODING ORGANS SIX MONTHS, A YEAR TO RECOVER
MAYBE NEVER WALK AGAIN... HIT HIS NOGGIN HARD, TOO. MAY BE BONKERS. TOO EARLY TO TELL
BUT, HEY! WE'LL TALK ABOUT HIS MEDICAL EXPENSES LATER. FIRST, THE "PAIN AND SUFFERING" DOUGH
LOOK HERE, BUDDY--YOU DON'T WANT TO RUIN YOUR KIDDIES' FUTURE, RIGHT?! THINK ABOUT IT, EH?!!
B-BUT, I DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY.
WHAT DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DO-- ROB A BANK?
NOT YET--JUST BORROW IT!
AM CREDIT
Low As 10%
FIRST TIME!
YOUR LEGS ARE YOUR GUARANTEE
E-Z LOAN
1-800 555-1567
NO ONE REFUSED! Ask for "Guido"!
I'LL INTRODUCE YOU TO SOME BUDDIES OF MINE...
OR JUST GIVE ME POWER OF ATTORNEY AND YOUR BANK ACCOUNT NUMBER AND I'LL TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING
GEE I-I DON'T KNOW

♫♪
OH, WOW...!
"OH, WOW" WHAT?!
NOTHING IT'S JUST THAT, WHEN YOU DO THAT, IT'S LIKE, WOW, YOU REALLY ARE A GIRL AFTER ALL...
STOP BABBLING LIKE AN IDIOT AND EAT THE DUMB APPLE!!
WHAT APPLE? THERE'S NOTHIN' LEFT BUT THE CORE!
WANT SOME OF THE PEEL? THERE'S LOTS OF THAT EH-HEH

OH, FORGET IT I'LL DO IT MYSELF
HEY, YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD AT THAT
BETTER THAN YOU, AT ANY RATE!
YOU'D MAKE SOME GUY A GOOD WIFE, YOU KNOW THAT?
YOU CALL THAT A COMPLIMENT?!
BANG BANG BANG
NOW WE'VE GOT YOU!!
FOUL GANG OF CON MEN AND LOAN SHARKS! YOU'RE UNDER ARREST FOR EXTORTION, BUNCO AND FRAUD!!
HUH?
WE'VE ALREADY NABBED YOUR SLEAZY BOSS!
BABO?!

AND HERE WE HAVE THE SUPPOSED VICTIM! "ON DEATH'S DOOR," EH?! "DONKERS," PERHAPS! LOOKS HEALTHY ENOUGH TO ME!
FAKING AN ACCIDENT, THEN PUTTING THE MUSCLE ON THE DRIVER FOR OUTRAGEOUS PAYOFFS! YOU'LL SWING FOR THIS!
PAYOFFS? DEATH'S DOOR?
BABO! HAVE YOU BEEN A BAD BOY AGAIN?!
I'M SORRRRRRY.
GIMME A BREAK, MASTER!
I DID IT ALL FOR POOR OL' WATARU
I MEAN, EVERY CLOUD HAS A SILVER LINING..
MORE LIKE A "FILTHY LUCRE LINING," WITH YOU!!
I'LL BET YOU LOT HAVE RECORDS A MILE LONG!! YOU'RE ALL COMING DOWN TO HEADQUARTERS!
GET YOUR PAWS OFF ME! I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!
I SAID HANDS OFF!!

AH-HAH! RESISTING ARREST, TOO!
SHUT YOUR TRAP!
YOU AMATEUR CLOWNS COULDN'T ARREST A DRUNKEN HAMSTER, MUCH LESS--
WHOA! STOP! DON'T! QUIT! YOU'LL BLOW OUR COVER!
NO NO NO NO!
SCREW THE COVER! I'M NOT TAKING THIS CRAP ANYMORE!
I'LL WALK STRAIGHT THROUGH THE FRONT GATES OF KYURAWEIL KEEP, BY GOD!
WHO THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, BITCH~?!
ENOUGH! SEIZE HER, MEN!!
FWAP

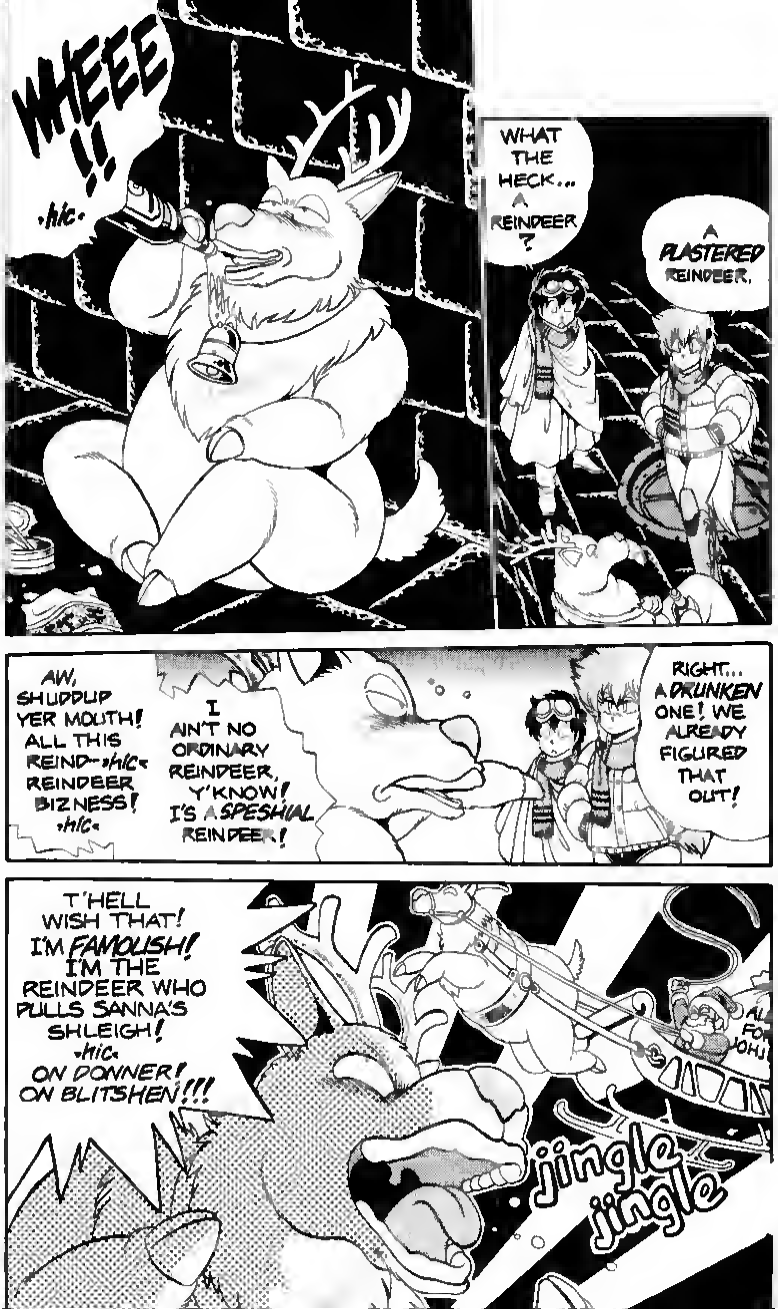
YOU'RE MESSIN' WITH MIAN TORIS!
YEAH! AND I'M WATARU!
M-MIAN TORIS?! THE MOST DANGEROUS, MOST FEARED CRIMINAL IN THE ENTIRE EMPIRE?!
UH-OH WE'RE IN TROUBLE, MEN.
TOO LATE, COPPERS!
THUS THE PRESENCE OF OUR THREE HEROES ON IMPERIAL SOIL WAS REVEALED TO THE AUTHORITIES IN NO TIME FLAT...
SO HOW DANGEROUS AND FEARED AM I? YOU KNOW ME? WATARU? I'M FAMOUS, TOO. WATARU, REMEMBER?

LITTLE MISS SANTA AND THE BIG BAD REINDEER

IMPERIAL DISTRICT THREE: ANTON CITY
I'LL HAUNT YOU FOR-EVER!
IT'S CHRIST-MAS...
FOR EVERYONE ELSE, THAT IS...
YEAH, BUT NOT FOR US. POOR, POOR PITIFUL US...
..sniff.. I WAN' MY MOMMY...
SO THIS IS WHERE YOU GOT TO!

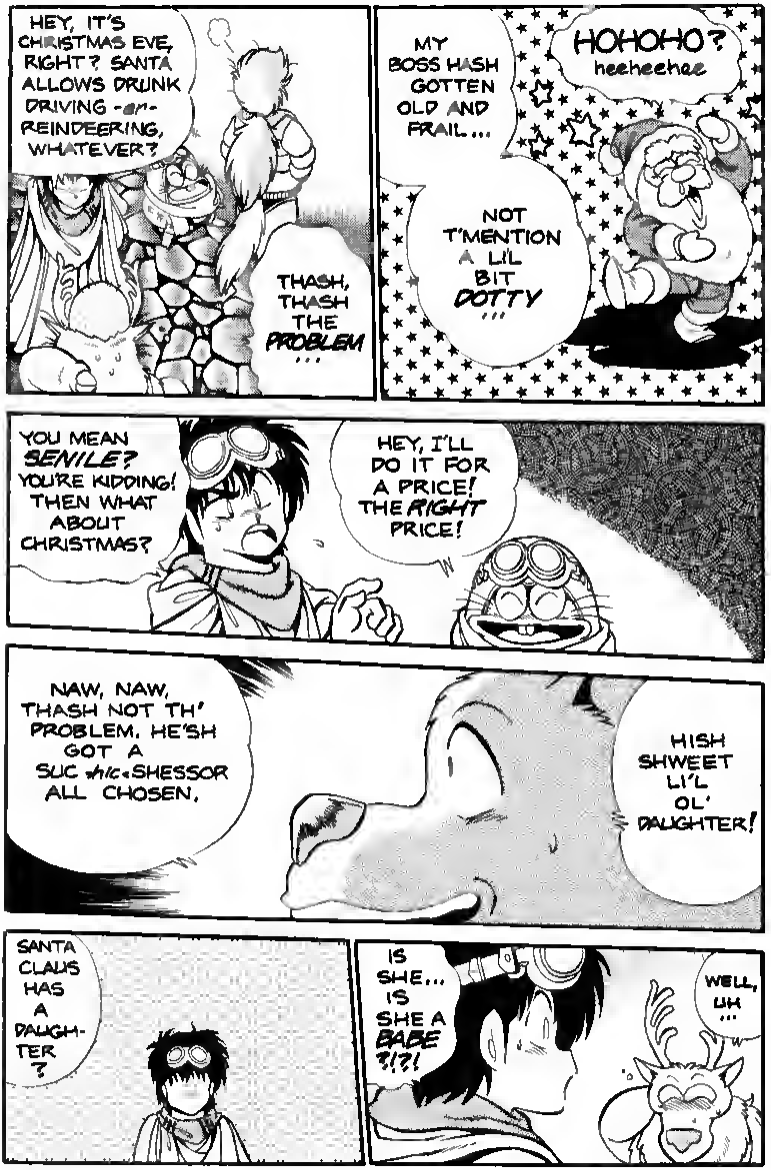
oh... HI, MIAN.
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU--DON'T USE MY NAME IN PUBLIC! WHAT'S BUGGING YOU TWO NOW!?
YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND, BUT ME AND MY POOR, LONG-SUFFERING BUDDY HAVEN'T HAD A PROPER CHRISTMAS FOR A LONG TIME.
NO LOG FIRE, NO MULLED WINE, NO SANTA CLAUS BRINGING ME RESALABLE, HIGH-VALUE CHRISTMAS PRESENTS...
BABO, DEAR FRIEND! sniff
WATARU, OLD BUDDY! sob
OH, THOSE POOR YOUNG MEN!
ALL RIGHT, I GIVE! I GIVE!
A GOOD TIME'S WHAT YOU WANT, RIGHT? SO LET'S PARTY!
YOU REALLY MEAN IT ?!
GEEZ, ANYTHING TO MAKE YOU SHUT YOUR WHINING TRAPS!
OUR MASTER WUVS US!
boohoohoo
CAN THE TEARS, WILL YA ?! sheesh, IT'S JUST A DUMB PARTY!

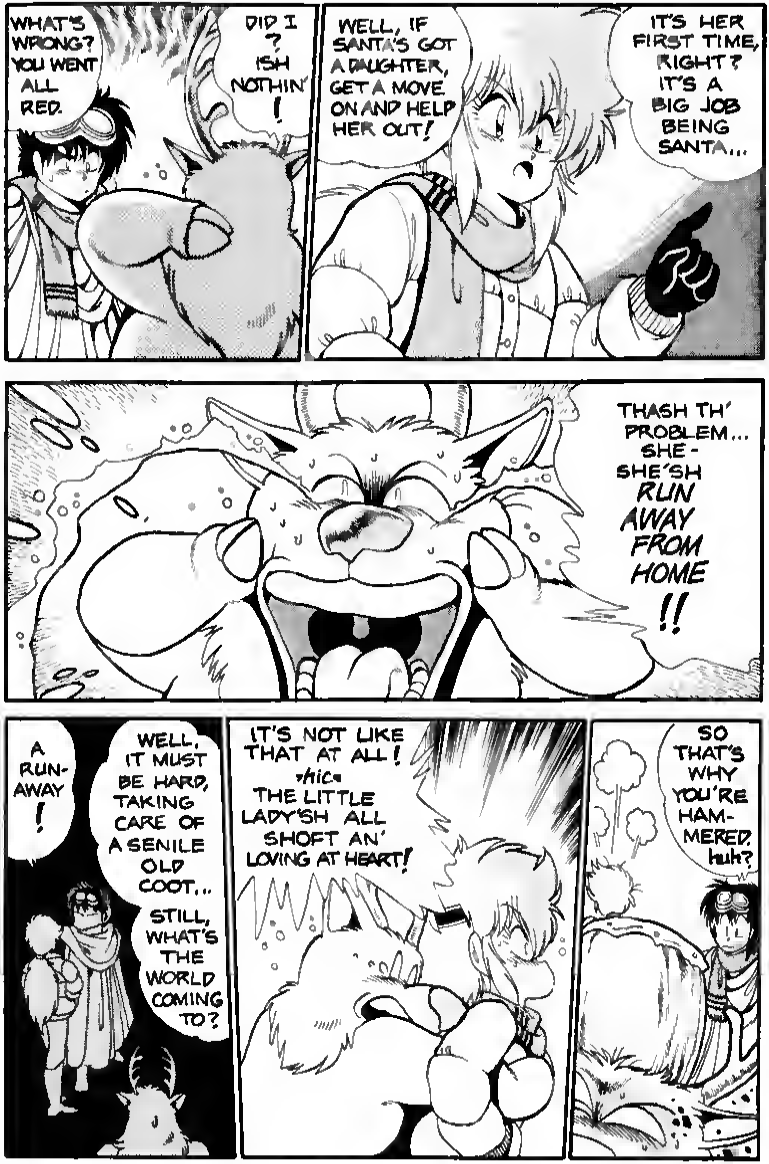
SIIII/LENT NIGHT...
HOOOLYY NIGHT...
AAALL IS CAAALM...
Fish Sa
AAALLL IS BRIIIGHT...
'ROUND YOUNG VIRGIN, MASTER AND BLOB ...
MERRY XMAS ANNA HAPPY NEW YEAR!
POP
A LITTLE LONELY, HUH?
NO KIDDIN' ...?
CHRISTMAS?! BAH! HUMBUG! A POXSH ON IT ALL!
!


WHEEE!!
•hic•
WHAT THE HECK... A REINDEER?
A PLASTERED REINDEER.
AW, SHUDDUP YER MOUTH! ALL THIS REIND-•HIC• REINDEER BIZNESS! •HIC•
I AIN'T NO ORDINARY REINDEER, Y'KNOW! I'S A SPESHIAL REINDEER!
RIGHT.. A DRUNKEN ONE! WE ALREADY FIGURED THAT OUT!
T'HELL WISH THAT! I'M FAMOUSH! I'M THE REINDEER WHO PULLS SANNA'S SHLEIGH! •HIC• ON DONNER! ON BLITSHEN!!!
jingle jingle

BOY, IS HE WASTED. 'SANTA,' HE SAYS!
SEEN ONE DRUNK, YOU SEEN 'EM ALL ...
HEY! WAIT UP YOU GUYSH !
C'MON, NOBODY BELIEVES THAT SANTA RUBBISH!
SOMETHING FOR NOTHING... IT'S A NICE DREAM...
I'LL SAY! ♡
CRNK !!
WHUD
THERE! -hic- NOW D'YA B'LIEVE ME ?!

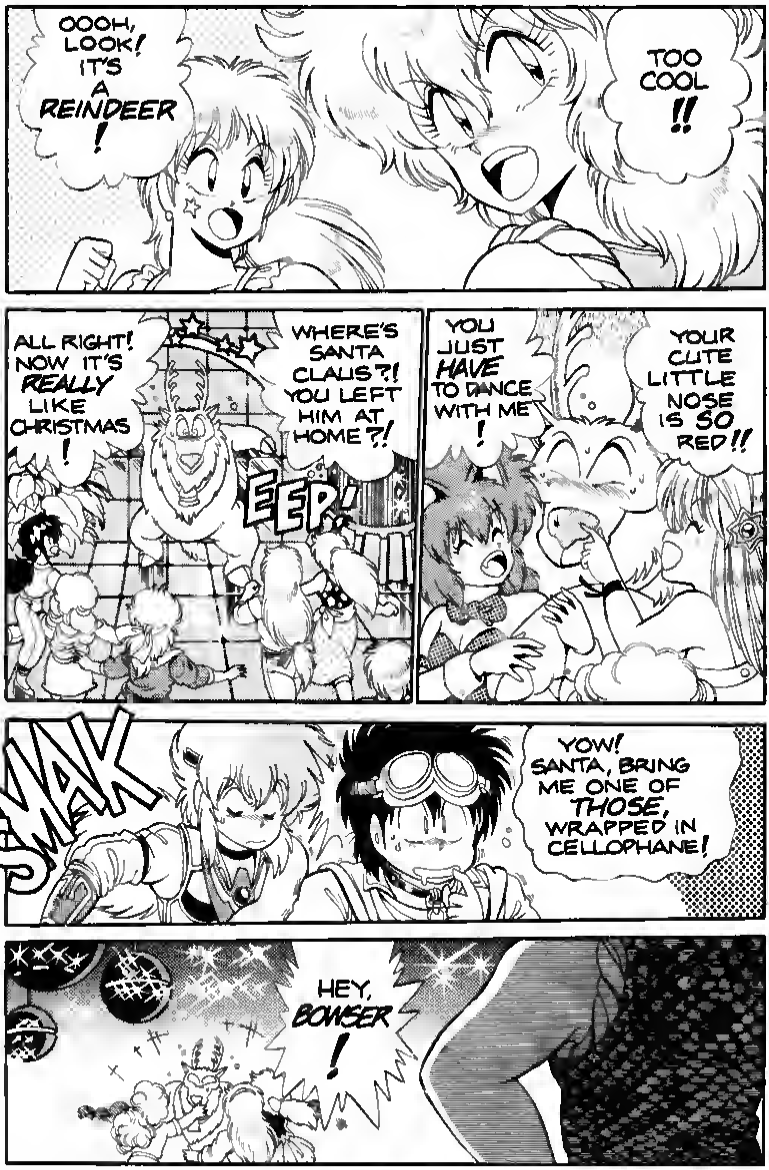
HOLY COW!
NNAHH!
KONGG
R.I.P.
SHO HOW ABOUT THAT, EH? YOU GUYSH-hic- BELIEVE ME NOW, HUH?
YEAH, WELL, I GUESS SO...
I BELIEVE HE'S AN IDIOT, ANYWAY...
BUT IF YOU'RE REALLY SANTA'S REINDEER, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
Sniffffff
;waaahh; THANK YOU FOR CARING!!
GRR!
!!

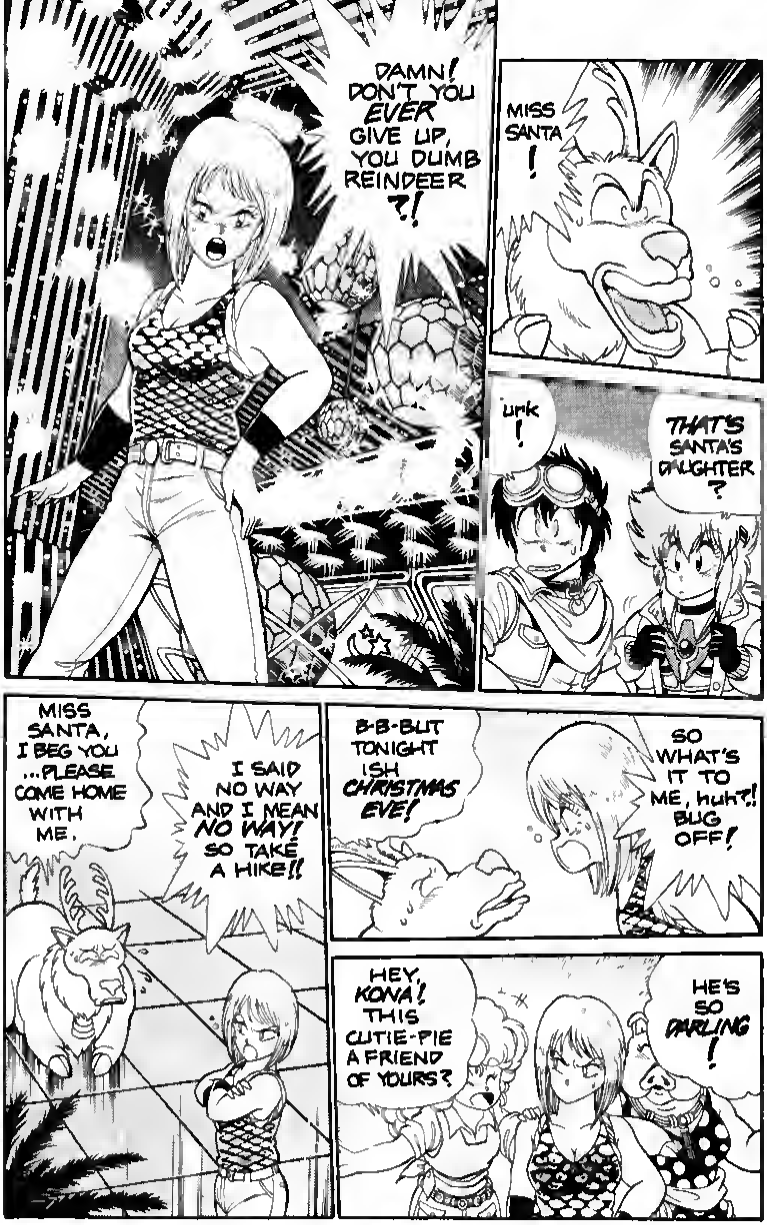

HEY, IT'S CHRISTMAS EVE, RIGHT? SANTA ALLOWS DRUNK DRIVING -er- REINDEERING, WHATEVER?
THASH, THASH THE PROBLEM ...
MY BOSS HASH GOTTEN OLD AND FRAIL...
NOT T'MENTION A LI'L BIT DOTTY ...
HOHOHO? heeheehee
YOU MEAN SENILE? YOU'RE KIDDING! THEN WHAT ABOUT CHRISTMAS?
HEY, I'LL DO IT FOR A PRICE! THE RIGHT PRICE!
NAW, NAW, THASH NOT TH' PROBLEM. HE'SH GOT A SUC CESSOR ALL CHOSEN.
HISH SHWEET LI'L OL' DAUGHTER!
SANTA CLAUS HAS A DAUGHTER ?
IS SHE... IS SHE A BABE ?!?!
WELL, UH ...


WHAT'S WRONG? YOU WENT ALL RED.
DID I ? ISH NOTHIN' !
WELL, IF SANTA'S GOT A DAUGHTER, GET A MOVE ON AND HELP HER OUT!
IT'S HER FIRST TIME, RIGHT? IT'S A BIG JOB BEING SANTA...
THASH TH' PROBLEM... SHE- SHE'SH RUN AWAY FROM HOME !!
A RUN-AWAY !
WELL, IT MUST BE HARD, TAKING CARE OF A SENILE OLD COOT...
STILL, WHAT'S THE WORLD COMING TO?
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT AT ALL! *hic* THE LITTLE LADY'SH ALL SHOFT AN' LOVING AT HEART!
SO THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HAM-MERED! huh?

YESH, KIND SIR. I'VE BEEN SEARCHING AN' SEARCHING SHINCE TH' SHUMMER...
I FI- -hic- FINALLY TRACKED TO THIS DISHTRIC; AN' FOUND HER...
HEY, THAT'S GREAT! SO EVERY-THING'S FINE!
YEAH, I FIGGURED SHO, BUT...
WHEN I FOUND HER, SHE...

YO, PARTY ANIMALS! THIS IS ONE BAAAD CHRISTMAS EVE, BABY! GET IT DOWN 'TIL THE MORNING LIGHT! TEAR IT UP!!
I TAKE IT MISS SANTA SWIPED DADDY'S CREDIT CARD...
THE LITTLE LADY'SH BREAKIN' HER POOR OL' PAPA'SH HEART. thick IT'SH JUSHT PARTY, PARTY, PARTY, NIGHT AFTER NIGHT.
NOW LET'S GET THIS DEAL STRAIGHT --YOU PROMISE US AS MANY PRESENTS AS WE WANT AS LONG AS WE GET HER OUT OF HERE?
er... I'LL DO MY BESHT, OKAY?


OOOH, LOOK! IT'S A REINDEER!
TOO COOL!!
ALL RIGHT! NOW IT'S REALLY LIKE CHRISTMAS!
WHERE'S SANTA CLAUS?! YOU LEFT HIM AT HOME?!
EEP!
YOU JUST HAVE TO DANCE WITH ME!
YOUR CUTE LITTLE NOSE IS SO RED!!
SMAK
YOW! SANTA, BRING ME ONE OF THOSE, WRAPPED IN CELLOPHANE!
HEY, BOWSER!

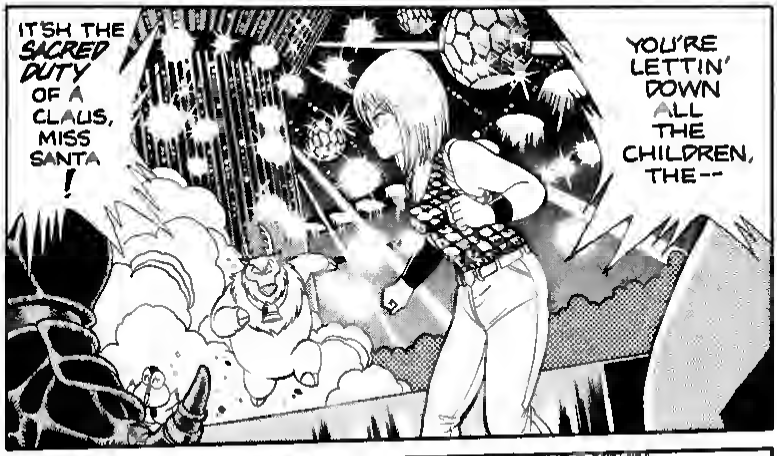

DAMN! DON'T YOU EVER GIVE UP, YOU DUMB REINDEER?!
MISS SANTA!
urk!
THAT'S SANTA'S DAUGHTER?
MISS SANTA, I BEG YOU ...PLEASE COME HOME WITH ME.
I SAID NO WAY AND I MEAN NO WAY! SO TAKE A HIKE!!
B-B-BUT TONIGHT ISH CHRISTMAS EVE!
SO WHAT'S IT TO ME, huh?! BUG OFF!
HEY, KONA! THIS CUTIE-PIE A FRIEND OF YOURS?
HE'S SO DARLING!

Hmph! NEVER SAW THE JERK BEFORE IN MY LIFE!
SO... WHO WANTS TO DANCE?
BUT MISS SANTA...
LOOK-- I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN, YOU GODDAMN STINKIN' UGLY HAIRBALL JERK!
Ka-
Whok
WELL, THAT SETTLES THAT, HUH?
DO... DO SOME-THING! I CAN'T JUST LEAVE HER HERE!
RIGHT, RIGHT, CALM DOWN.

uhm, EXCUSE ME! MISS SANTA?!
uh... HI?
YOU'RE ONE PATHETIC BOWLEGGED, HAYSEED HICK TO THINK I'D DANCE WITH YOU!
JUST COME WITH ME FOR A MINUTE, DAMMIT! I WANT TO TALK TO YOU!
GET YOUR SLIMY MEATHOOKS OFF OF ME!
WHO'S DA PROBLEM, KONA! WHO'S DA MUG?!
Bye-Bye!
mm, NOBODY SPECIAL...

YOU RAN AWAY ?!
YOU GUTLESS LITTLE WIMP !
YEAH, RIGHT! THANKS A LOT FOR WARNING ME ABOUT HER KILLER BOYFRIEND!
WITH THAT GUY HANGING AROUND, I BETTER GO GET--
YAHOO!
EEP!
HEY, WE DIDN'T COME HERE TO DANCE!
WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, SPOILSPORT? I'M HAVING FUN!
JUST GIVE ME A HAND FOR A SEC, OKAY?

aw, COME ON, SWEETHEART! LET'S DANCE!
THIS IS JUST A FILL-IN ISSUE--FORGET THE PLOT LINE FOR A FEW PANELS!
BUT-BUT-I DON'T KNOW HOW TO DANCE!
...STAYIN' ALIVE! STAYIN' ALIVE! ♪
YOU CALL THAT DANCING, YOU POTATO HEAD!
FOR YOU, LOVELY LADY, I MARK IT DOWN 50%!
EARRINGS, LIPSTICK, FOUNDATION... HEY, IT'S A NEW YOU!
WHAT THE HECK DO THEY THINK THEY'RE DOING! -hic- THISH ISH THE LAST TIME I HIRE THESH GUYS FOR A CHRISTMAS SPECIAL!
DARN IT ALL... I'LL JUSHT HAFTA CONVINCE HER MYSHELF! -hic-
MISS SANTA!!


IT'SH THE SACRED DUTY OF A CLAUS, MISS SANTA!
YOU'RE LETTIN' DOWN ALL THE CHILDREN, THE--

YOU'RE A REAL PAIN IN THE BUTT, BOWSER!
BUT THERE'SH NO TIME LEFT!
I'LL GET YOU HOME IF I HAVE TO *HIC* DRAG YOU THERE!

whoops
PREPARE TA MEET YER MAKER, YA MANGY HUNKA COWHIDE!!
!

D-DON'T HURT HIM, KHARAK...!!
LOOK, TAKE IT FROM ME, BABE. GUYS LIKE DIS, IF YA DON'T BUST 'EM UP A BIT...
Aiyeee!
DEY JUST DON' GET IT!!
SKRASCH
ZRAKK
BOOMF
ZAP
FZAKK
ZAP
AIEEE!!!
SZZLK FZZAK
IT'S SHORTING OUT!!

WHKOOM
FZZAKK FZZAKK
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?!
WHERE'S THAT STUPID REIN-DEER?
WHOOSSH
!
HEY! A REINDEER!
UNHAND ME, YOU CRAZED UNGU-LATE!
YOU FOUR-LEGGED FLEA FACTORY!
TIME TO DIE!

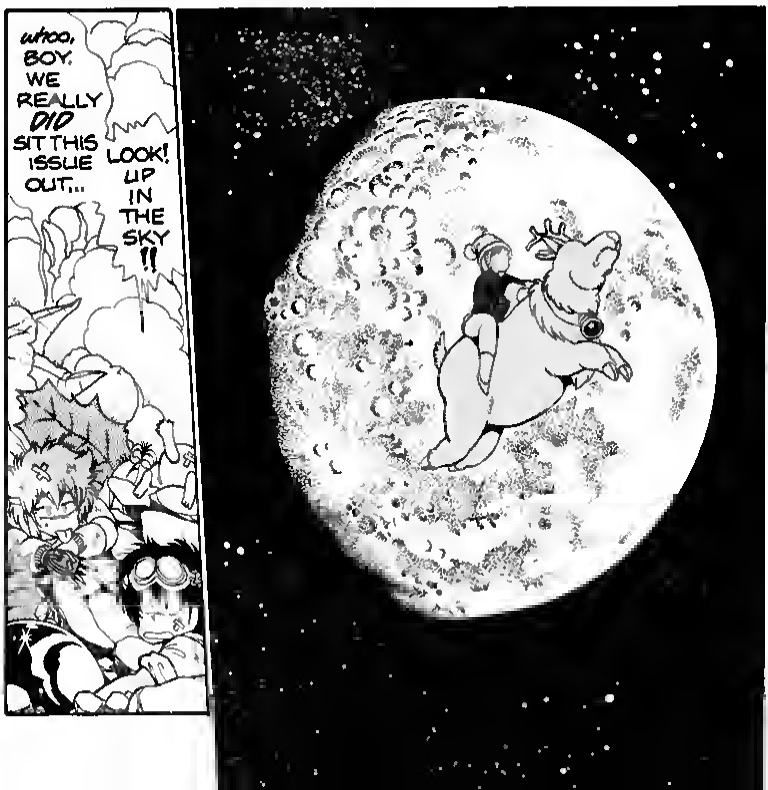
THERE... -hic- HE WON'T BE ABLE TO GET TO UGH, NOW.
JUST WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, DRAGGING ME UP HERE ?!
I'M NOT GOING HOME, UNDERSTAND ?! NEVER, EVER! NO WAY!
WHA--
PUT THESH ON, MISS SANTA!
DADDY'S COAT AND HAT...

NO WAY!
FWAP
WHY DO I HAVE TO DO THIS STUPID OLD SANTA CLAUS JUNK! WHY SHOULD I EVEN CARE?!
STUPID...?!
JUST LOOK AT IT FROM MY SIDE FOR ONCE, OKAY? DOWN IN THE REAL WORLD, EVERYBODY'S HANGING OUT, HAVING A GOOD TIME.
I WANT TO HAVE A GOOD TIME, TOO. IS THERE ANYTHING WRONG WITH THAT?! I WANT A REAL LIFE!
BUT,.. BUT IT'SH SANTA'S JOB TO BRING EVERYONE PRESENTS. *hic*
NOT JUST PRESENTS.. HAPPINESS TOO.
BUT DOING IT DOESN'T MAKE ME HAPPY! SO WHEN DO I GET MY HAPPINESS?!
ah-CHOO!

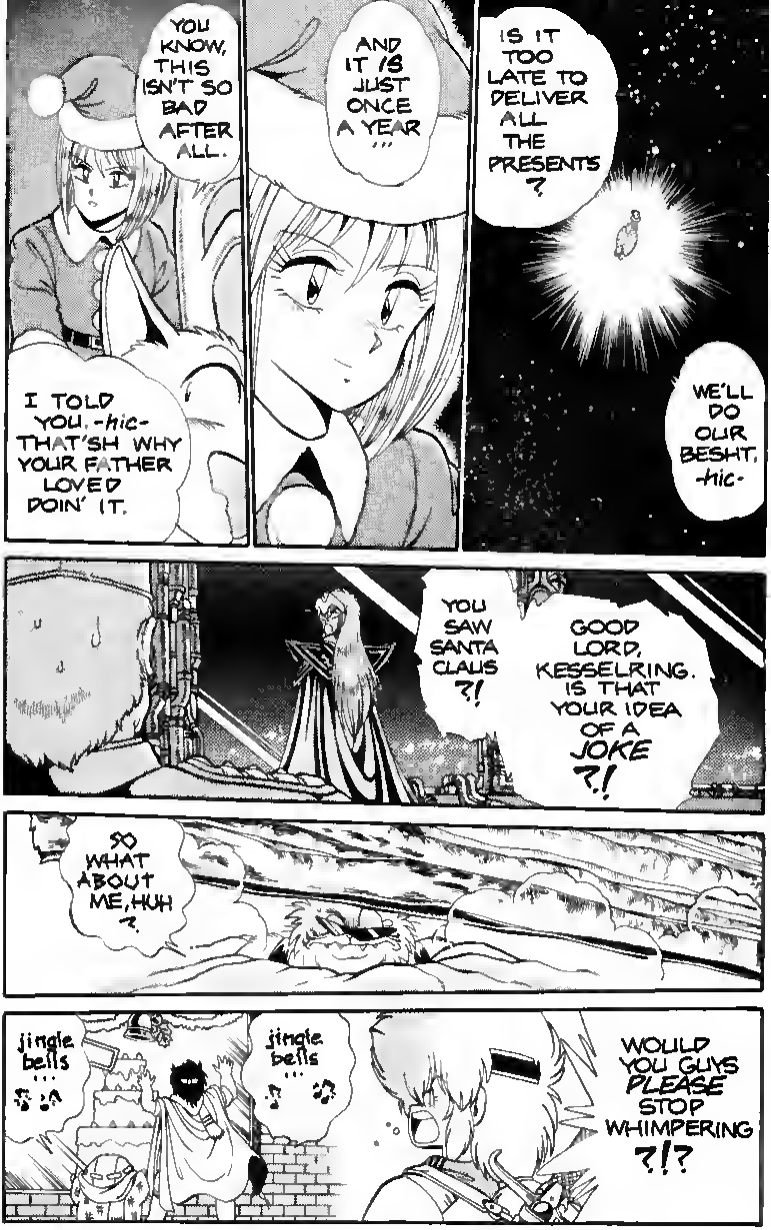
OH, GIVE ME THAT DUMB OUTFIT. I'M FREEZING.
YOU'LL WEAR THEM ?!
I'M DIFFERENT FROM YOU, BOWSER. I DON'T HAVE A GLUED-ON FUR COAT.
YAHOO! IT LOOKSH PERFECT ON YA! ♡
YOU DUMB OL' GOAT !!!
YOU DON'T NEED TO GIVE ME THAT CRAP.
!!
KACHOK!
YOU RATBAG FLEABITTEN MULE! I'LL TEAR YOUR ANTHERS OFF!
KACHOK
KACHOK

HE'S TRYING TO CHOP DOWN THE TREE!
YEESH... WHAT DO YOU SHEE IN HIM, ANYWAY?
EEEK!
MISS SANTA!!
SHE'S FALLING!!
OOMPH!
WHUP

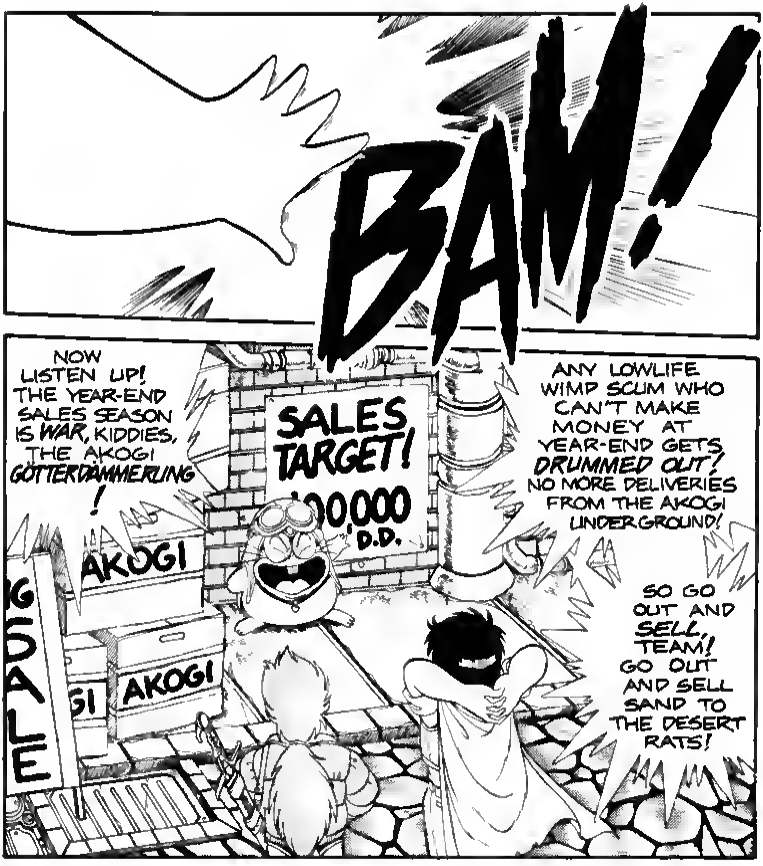
TIMBERRR !!!
SKRAKK
WHKOOM


whoo, BOY. WE REALLY DID SIT THIS ISSUE OUT...
LOOK! UP IN THE SKY !!

IT'S SANTA CLAUS! IT'S REALLY SANTA CLAUS!
WOWWW!!
SANTA!
SANTA!
WOWEE!
PAPA, MAMA, IT'S SANTA! LOOK, LOOK!
BONGG
BONGGG
SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT...
ALL IS CALM, ALL IS BRIGHT...
"ROUND YON VIRGIN MOTHER AND CHILD..."


YOU KNOW, THIS ISN'T SO BAD AFTER ALL.
I TOLD YOU, -hic- THAT'SH WHY YOUR FATHER LOVED DOIN' IT.
AND IT IS JUST ONCE A YEAR ...
IS IT TOO LATE TO DELIVER ALL THE PRESENTS ?
WE'LL DO OUR BESHT, -hic-
YOU SAW SANTA CLAUS ?!
GOOD LORD, KESSELRING. IS THAT YOUR IDEA OF A JOKE ?!
SO WHAT ABOUT ME, HUH ?
jingle bells ...
jingle bells ...
WOULD YOU GUYS PLEASE STOP WHIMPERING ?!?

DO ANDROIDS SHED ELECTRIC TEARS?
A T


BAM!
NOW LISTEN UP! THE YEAR-END SALES SEASON IS WAR, KIDDIES, THE AKOGI GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG!
SALES TARGET!
D.D.
AKOGI
AKOGI
ANY LOWLIFE WIMP SCUM WHO CAN'T MAKE MONEY AT YEAR-END GETS DRUMMED OUT! NO MORE DELIVERIES FROM THE AKOGI UNDERGROUND!
SO GO OUT AND SELL, TEAM! GO OUT AND SELL SAND TO THE DESERT RATS!
NOW, ABOUT YOUR ROLES IN THIS BIG PUSH...
WATARU, YOU'RE ON DOOR-TO-DOOR SALES. MIAN, YOU'RE THE BIKINI PROMO BABE.

HEY!
COME BACK HERE!!
HA, HA! TAKE THAT!
SINCE WHEN DO WE HAVE TO HELP YOU GET RICH, YOU MONEY-GRUBBING COOTIE!?
DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH! LITTLE MISER!
eh?
HOW DID YOU GET HERE?!
bgh!
YOU DRAGGED ME HERE, YOU BEAN-BRAINED BIMBO!
DID NOT!!
YOU TALK BACK TOO MUCH.
sorry

I'M FEELING A BIT PECKISH. LET'S GRAB A BITE.
ALL RIGHT!!
MAKE IT SNAPPY!
WHY DO I ALWAYS HAVE TO BUY?
DON'T SCREW UP THIS TIME! ONE CHEESEBURGER, WITH A LARGE FRIES! AND SWEETIE, HOLD THE PICKLES.
YES, MASTER.
heh, heh...
....

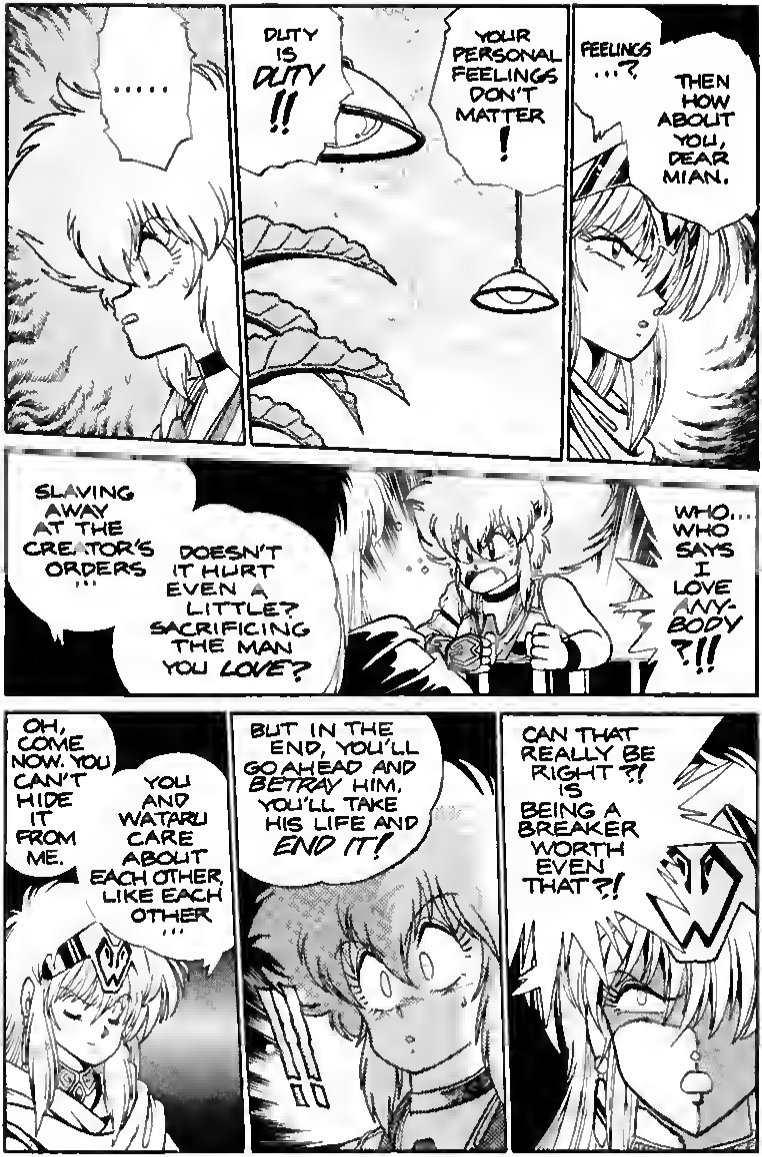
sooner or later he'll figure it out.
I wonder if I should just tell him everything, no holding back.
but once he knows what I'm trying to do... what'll he do about it?
IS THIS SEAT TAKEN?
NO, MY FRIEND'S UP FRO--

WELL, MAYBE I'LL JUST SIT DOWN UNTIL HE RETURNS.
SHION!
IT'S BEEN AWHILE, MIAN.

BY 'FRIEND,' YOU MEAN WATARU, !!!!? GETTING ALONG WELL, ARE YOU?
I DIDN'T KNOW EMPRESSES HAD TO SNEAK OUT FOR THEIR OWN CHEESE-BURGERS.
WHAT DO YOU WANT NOW?
MIAN!
YOUR LAST CHANCE!
FORGET YOU WERE EVER A BREAKER AND COME TO ME, MIAN!
I NEED YOUR POWER, CHILD!
I'LL SEE THAT YOU DON'T REGRET IT!

YOU WANT MY COOPERATION?
ABANDON MY DUTY AS A BREAKER?
NO GODDAMN WAY!!
WHY DO YOU CLING SO TO THIS 'DUTY'...
DON'T YOU SEE HOW FOOLISH IT IS?
BUT... BUT... BUT THAT'S OUR MISSION! ALL OF US!
IT'S ALL THE WILL OF THE CREATOR!
THE 'CREATOR' AGAIN ...
LET ME ASK YOU THIS... DO YOU TRULY UNDERSTAND WHAT YOUR BREAKER DUTY WILL MEAN?
LOOK AROUND YOU, MIAN.
EH?

YOUR DUTY MEANS DESTROYING THEM ALL, ALL THESE INNOCENT, UNKNOWING PEOPLE.
CAN YOU REALLY DO THAT?
I CER-TAINLY COULDN'T.
THAT'S WHY I REJECTED OUR MISSION AND BECAME THEIR PROTECTOR.
OH, YES... AND EXTERMINATED ALL THE OTHER BREAKERS EXCEPT ME!
YOU CALL YOURSELF THEIR PROTECTOR BUT YOU ACT MORE LIKE THEIR MASTER!!
NAIVE CHILD.. I MERELY BROUGHT LIGHT TO THEIR PRIMITIVE, BACKWARD CULTURE.
I GAVE THEM CIVILIZATION, UNITY, PRODUCTIVITY! I BUILT THEM A MIGHTY EMPIRE!
AND I WON'T LET ANYONE DESTROY IT!
NO ONE!!


.....
DUTY IS DUTY !!
YOUR PERSONAL FEELINGS DON'T MATTER !
FEELINGS ...?
THEN HOW ABOUT YOU, DEAR MIAN.
WHO... WHO SAYS I LOVE ANY-BODY ?!!
SLAVING AWAY AT THE CREATOR'S ORDERS ...
DOESN'T IT HURT EVEN A LITTLE? SACRIFICING THE MAN YOU LOVE?
OH, COME NOW. YOU CAN'T HIDE IT FROM ME.
YOU AND WATARU CARE ABOUT EACH OTHER, LIKE EACH OTHER ...
BUT IN THE END, YOU'LL GO AHEAD AND BETRAY HIM. YOU'LL TAKE HIS LIFE AND END IT!
CAN THAT REALLY BE RIGHT ?! IS BEING A BREAKER WORTH EVEN THAT ?!

YOU ...
YOU C-CAN'T CHANGE MY MIND.
I SEE ...
HOW VERY SAD.
.....
I'LL BE WAITING IN KYURAWEIL KEEP.
BUT --
SHIOU !
FARE-WELL.
IT WAS GOOD TO SEE YOU.
CAN THAT REALLY BE RIGHT ?!!

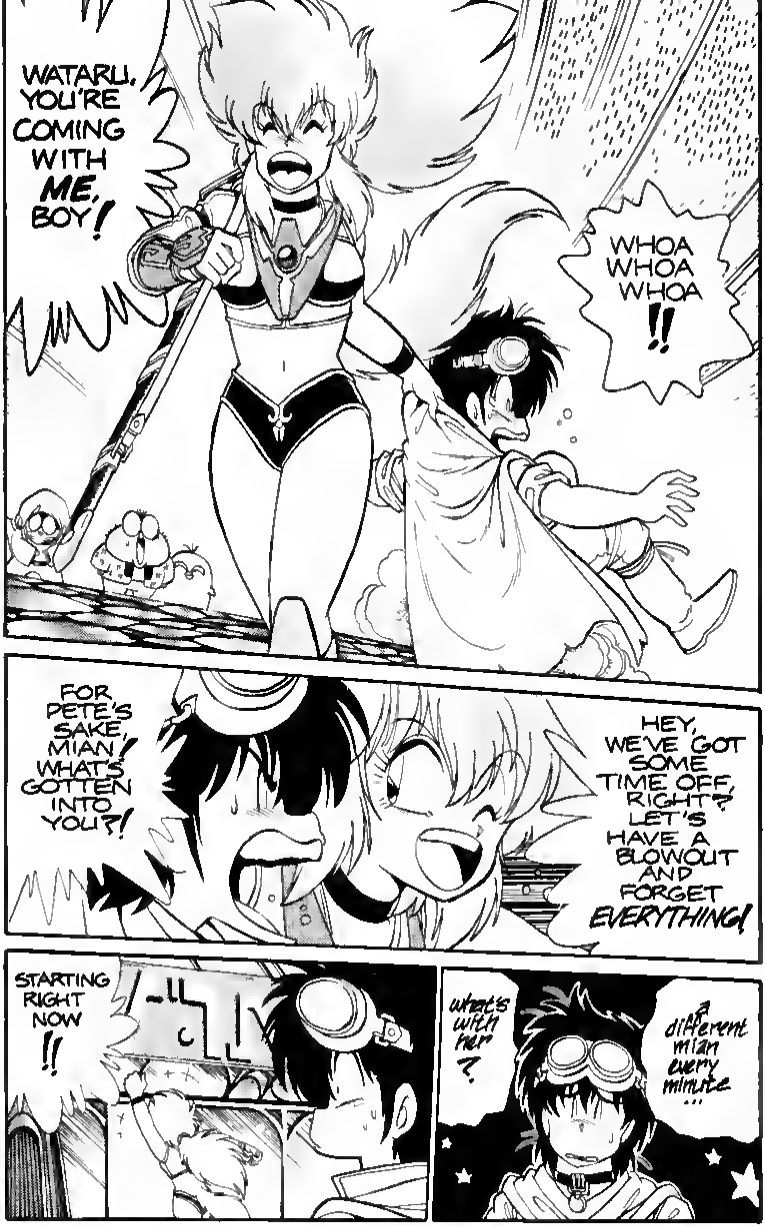
I GOT YOUR GRUB.
BOY, WAS IT EVER CROWDED! WHAT A MADHOUSE!
THAT'S WEIRD. I COULD'VE SWORN I SAW YOU TALKING TO SOMEONE...
Hmph
oh?
HEY, WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT HAPPENED?
YOU FEELIN' SICK OR SOMETHIN?
BUG OFF!
•sniff•
oh my god! she's... she's CRYING?!

GZSNORK
HEY HEY!
COME ON! WHAT'RE YOU CRYING ABOUT?!
WILL YOU JUST SHUT UP?! I JUST GOT SOMETHING IN MY EYE, THAT'S ALL!
GEE, WHERE HAVE I HEARD THAT ONE BEFORE?
SHUTTUP SHUTTUP SHUTTUP!!
IF I SAY I GOT SOMETHING IN MY EYE, THEN I DO!!
WH-WHATEVER YOU SAY...
FWMP
FOR PETE'S SAKE!

NOW WHAT? I THOUGHT YOU WERE HUNGRY.
WHAT? OH, OH, YEAH, STARVING...
still, shion might be on to something, what did she say... we like each other?
WEIRD BROAD...
let's try this out, mm mm'dear...
SAY, WATARU...
I WAS JUST WONDERING, YOU KNOW... WHAT DO YOU THINK OF ME?
THE BITCH FROM HELL.
SKRASH
AND ON TOP OF THAT, YOU KNOW, YOU'RE VIOLENT, A LOUSY EMPLOYER, REMARKABLY STINGY, VILE TEMPER...
HNGGG

BUT STILL, IT'S FUN HANGING OUT WITH YOU.
HUH?
SURE! I MEAN, JUST ME AND BABO, WHAT A DRAG.
GIVE ME A CUTE BABE LIKE YOU ANY DAY!
REALLY?!
.....
RECENTLY, YOU'VE STOPPED PESTERING ME ABOUT THINGS...
YOU KNOW, BREAKERS, THE EMPRESS...
LIKE HEY, YOU TOLD ME TO BELIEVE YOU, RIGHT?
SO I'M BE-LIEVING YOU, MIAN... BELIEVE ME.
TH-THANKS.
it hurts...
MNCH MNCHGULP

I never thought it would hurt so much to keep on deceiving you...
if I could, I would tell you everything. everything.
but if I did, this caravan of ours would be,... over...
and with it, my mission... the sacred mission of a breaker.
AAH!
ENOUGH! I GIVE! I QUIT !!
ALL THIS THINKING GETS ME DOWN!
I'M GONNA PARTY TONIGHT! IT'S PARTY TIME!!
NOW WHAT?


WATARU, YOU'RE COMING WITH ME, BOY!
WHOA WHOA WHOA !!
FOR PETE'S SAKE, MIAN! WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?!
HEY, WE'VE GOT SOME TIME OFF, RIGHT? LET'S HAVE A BLOWOUT AND FORGET EVERYTHING!
STARTING RIGHT NOW !!
what's with her?
different mian every minute...

YA HOO !!
WOOSHH
YOU'RE DRAGGING YOUR ASS, BOY !
GET WITH IT !
DAMMIT ! I'LL SHOW YOU !
VROOOMMM

WHO'S A SLOWPOKE NOW, EH ?!
'SLOW DOWN-- THE 55 LIMIT SAVES LIVES' ...RIGHT?
KRSH
something is bugging her?!
AIEEE!! HELLP!! WHAT THE HELL?!
BZATT
BZATT

EAT YOUR HEART OUT! 50,000 POINTS!
PKOW PKOW
SO WHAT? EVEN I CAN DO--...
BRTTT
OH, SHIT!! I'M DEAD!!
AND ON THE FIRST ROUND, TOO!
YOU'RE AS USELESS AS THAT MANABE GUY, WATARU.
BKOOM ZAP
BOOM BOOM BKOOM
BUDDABUDD
ACK!!
BING BONGGG
GAME OVER
OH, BOY, WHAT A BUMMER. I ALMOST CLEARED THAT LAST LEVEL.

hmmm
...

there's something fishy going on, miam.
you're trying too hard to have fun...
it looks like you're trying to convince yourself...
like there's something you want to forget...
I wonder what it is...
WHAM
HOLY BATSHIT!! THIS STUFF IS STRONG!!
WHAT THE HELL DID SHE ORDER?!
AAH! I'M ALL DANCED OUT!
I NEED A DRINK!

GIVE IT HERE, WATARU.
BUT--
WAIT, WAIT! THAT'S REALLY STRONG!
HEY, NO SWEAT! WANT ME TO CHUG IT FOR YOU?
STOP, YOU IDIOT! YOU NEED A MIXER--
GLUGGLUGGLUG
AAH...

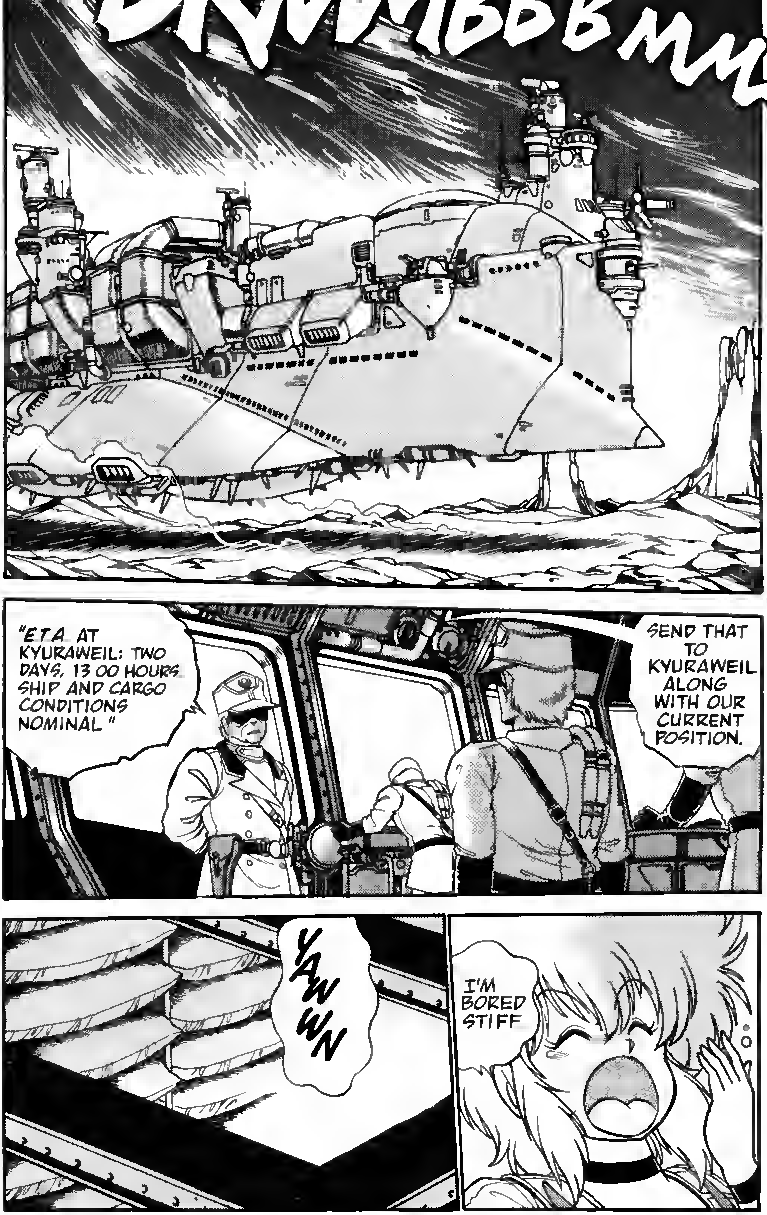
SMASH
oof!
AAH...
gmph!
BOY, MIAN, YOU'RE NOT YOURSELF TONIGHT!
NOW GET UP! COME ON!
WATARU...?
YOU KNOW, SEEING YOU LIKE THIS... YOU'RE NOT A BAD-LOOKING GUY...
HUH?
M-M-MIAN?
MIAN?! H-HEY, STOP THAT!
WHA... WHAT ARE YOU DOING!! HEY!
HEY!

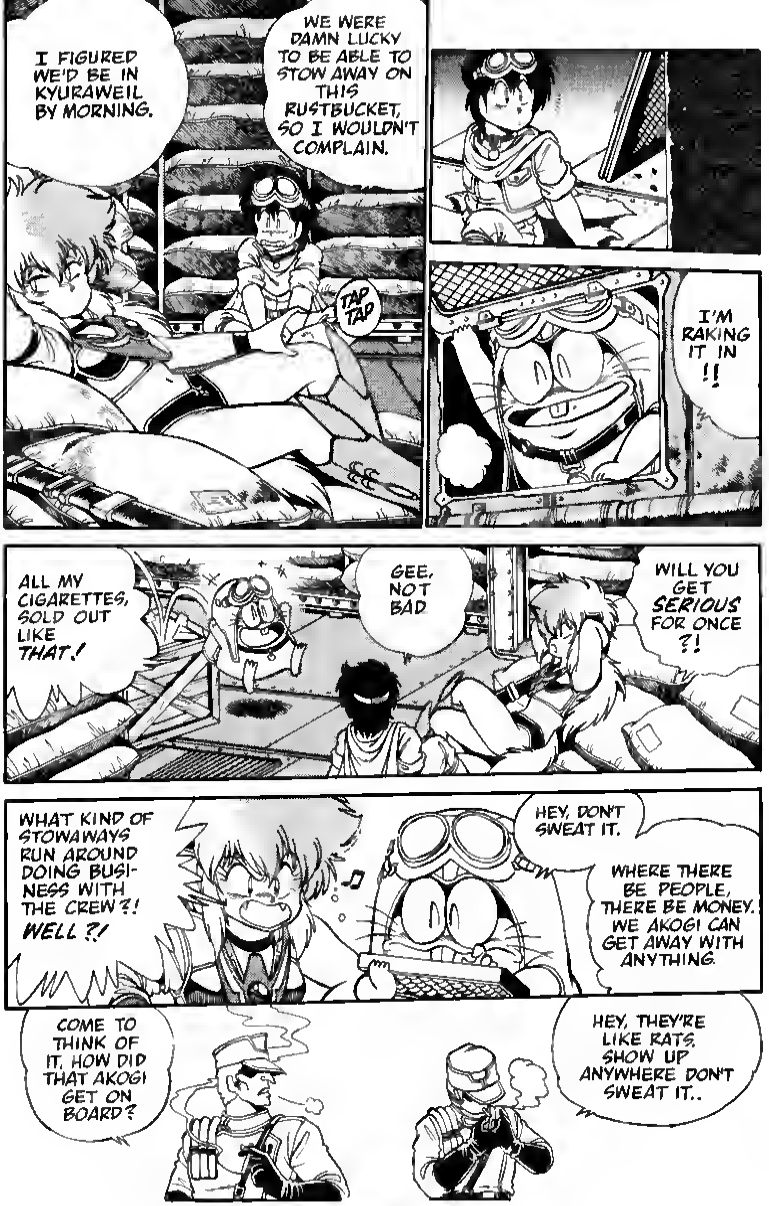
MIAN, STOP IT! YOU'RE DRUNK!
IF THIS IS SOME KIND OF JOKE, IT'S NOT--
--FUNNY?
oh, wow... she... she means it...?!
this is bad, bad, bad! if we go to second base, even third base, I'll--
W-WAIT A MINUTE, MIAN! I APPRECIATE THIS, I REALLY DO! BUT I'M NOT SPIRITUALLY PREPARED TO ENTER A SIGNIFICANT R- NTU
NOT... YET..

WHUD
BAM!!!
ZZZ
.....
SOMETHING'S DEFINITELY WRONG WITH YOU TONIGHT, MIAN...
WOW!
WHAT TH' HECK?

BOY, TALK ABOUT A CRAZY DAY...
OOF... SHE'S HEAVY ...
BABO!
WHAT'S ALL THAT JUNK?
JUNK ...?!! IT'S LEFTOVER INVENTORY!!
SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DON'T HELP OUT?!
HOW AM I GOING TO UNLOAD ALL THIS STUFF NOW, YOU USELESS LUMP OF LUNG?!
SAME TO YOU! I'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT TODAY!
OH, HAVE YOU?! MAKING OUT UNDER THE BOARDWALK, I BET! GIVE ME A FEEL!
DROP DEAD!!
TO BE CONTINUED!

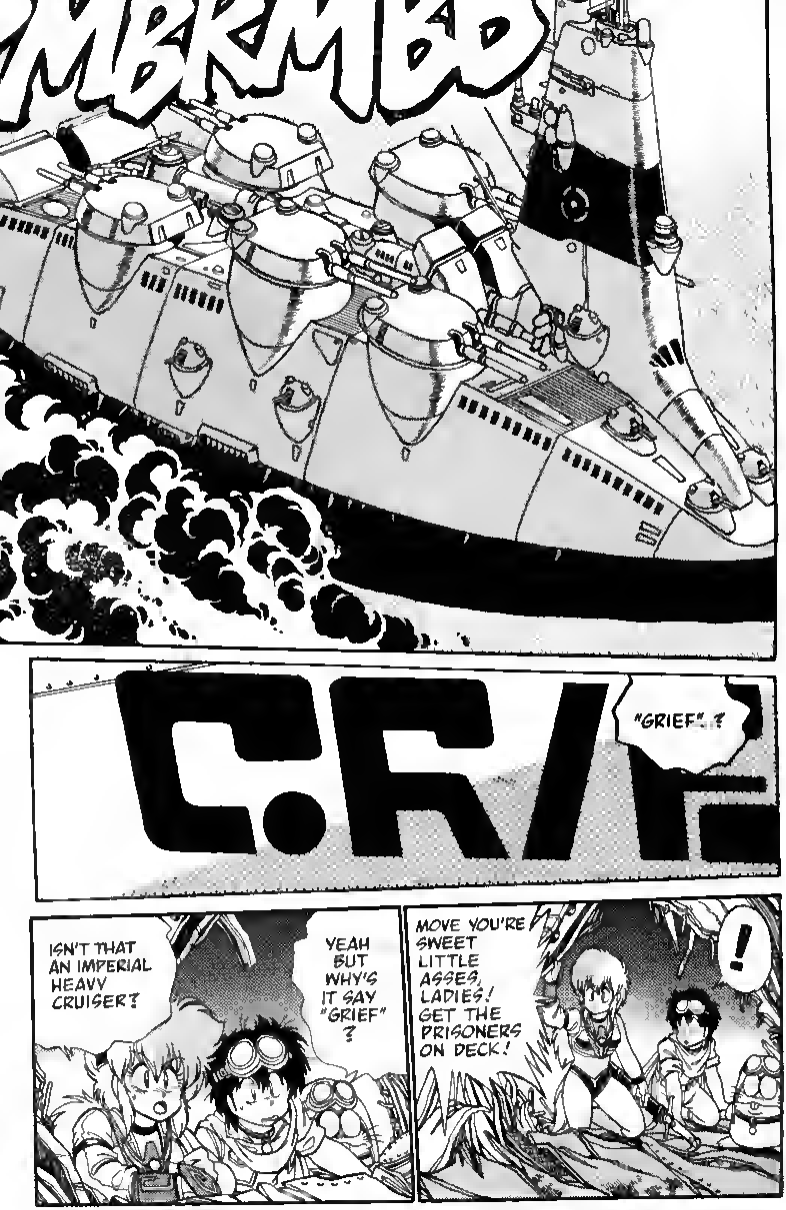
STEEL STORM - PRELUDE


"ETA AT KYURAWEIL: TWO DAYS, 13 00 HOURS. SHIP AND CARGO CONDITIONS NOMINAL."
SEND THAT TO KYURAWEIL ALONG WITH OUR CURRENT POSITION.
YAWN
I'M BORED STIFF


I FIGURED WE'D BE IN KYURAWEIL BY MORNING.
WE WERE DAMN LUCKY TO BE ABLE TO STOW AWAY ON THIS RUSTBUCKET, SO I WOULDN'T COMPLAIN.
TAP TAP
I'M RAKING IT IN !!
ALL MY CIGARETTES, SOLD OUT LIKE THAT.!
GEE, NOT BAD
WILL YOU GET SERIOUS FOR ONCE ?!
WHAT KIND OF STOWAWAYS RUN AROUND DOING BUSINESS WITH THE CREW?! WELL ?!
HEY, DON'T SWEAT IT.
WHERE THERE BE PEOPLE, THERE BE MONEY. WE AKOGI CAN GET AWAY WITH ANYTHING.
COME TO THINK OF IT, HOW DID THAT AKOGI GET ON BOARD?
HEY, THEY'RE LIKE RATS, SHOW UP ANYWHERE DON'T SWEAT IT..

VREEE
VREEE
VREEE
OH, SHIT !
ALARMS !
NOW SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE?! IT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE YOU WENT GOOFING AROUND UP THERE!
RULE ONE "NO PROFIT WITHOUT RISK"
WWHOOSH!!!
I GOT THIS BAD FEELING
BKOOM
EE!!

THREE HITS ON THE STARBOARD SIDE! OUR BOILERS ARE DOWN, SIR!!
WARSHIP CLOSING AT FLANK SPEED-- SEND A MAYDAY!!
CONFOUND IT, WATARU... WAKE UP OR YOU'LL BURN TO DEATH!
MOAN...
HMM... DEATH BY INCINERATION COVERED UNDER WATARU'S POLICY 901... I COLLECT..
WE'LL ESCAPE THROUGH THE BREACH! HURRY!!
HEY, WAIT FOR ME!
HOLD IT!
RMBBRMBBRMBB

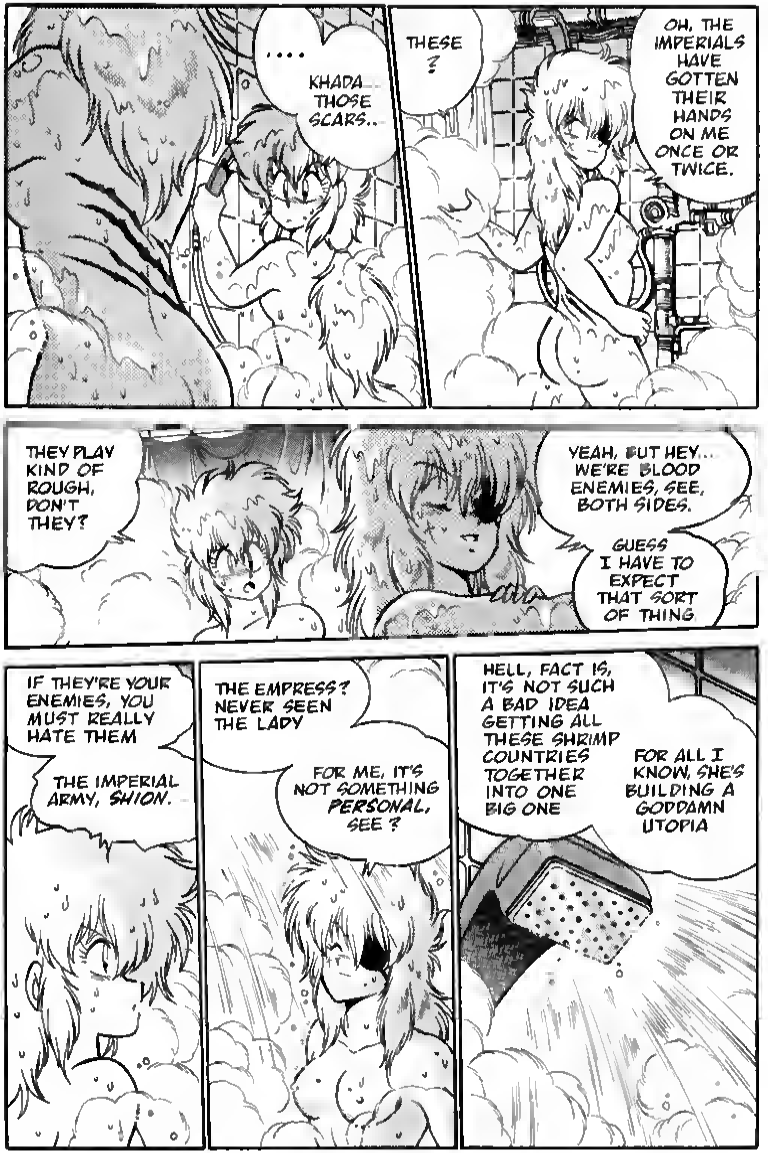

MBRMBD
C.R/
"GRIEF"..?
ISN'T THAT AN IMPERIAL HEAVY CRUISER?
YEAH BUT WHY'S IT SAY "GRIEF" ?
MOVE YOU'RE SWEET LITTLE ASSES, LADIES! GET THE PRISONERS ON DECK!
!

LISA! HAVE YOU WASTED THE COMM ROOM YET?
MICKY! TAKE TWO OR THREE OF THE GIRLS AND CHECK OUT THE CARGO!
HEY.. ISN'T THAT-?!
WHAT THE-?!
KHAA!!

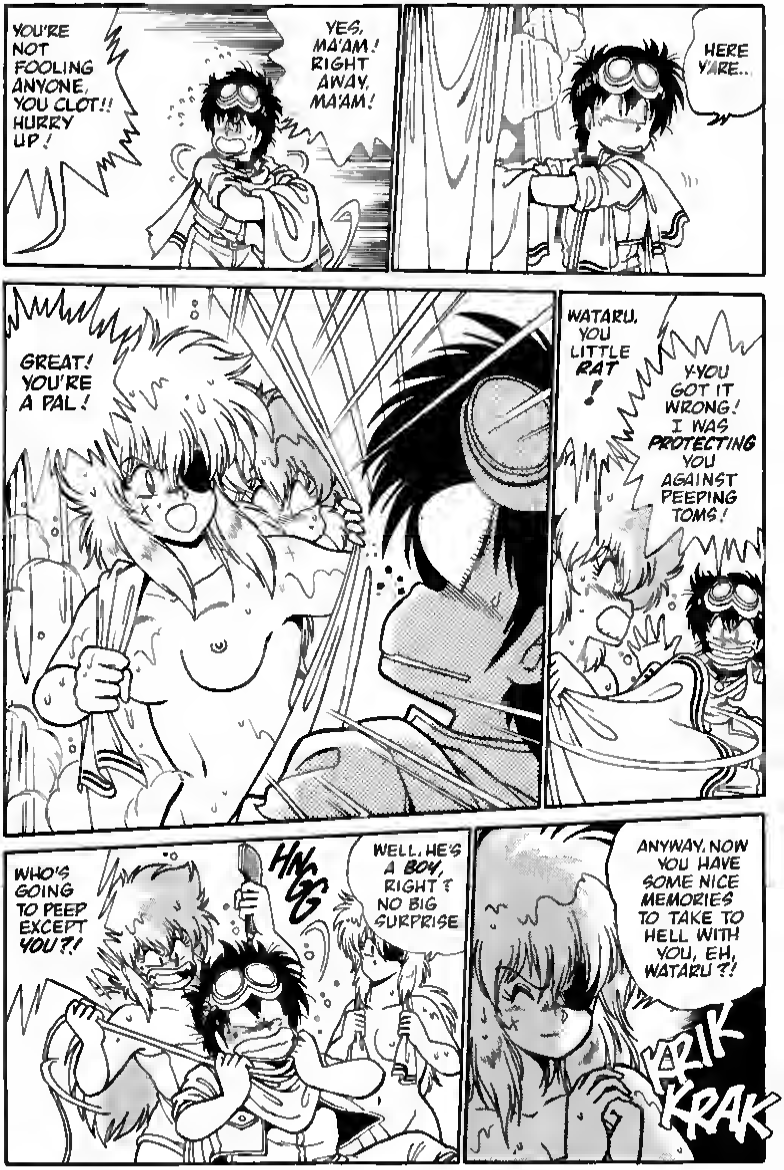
KABOOM

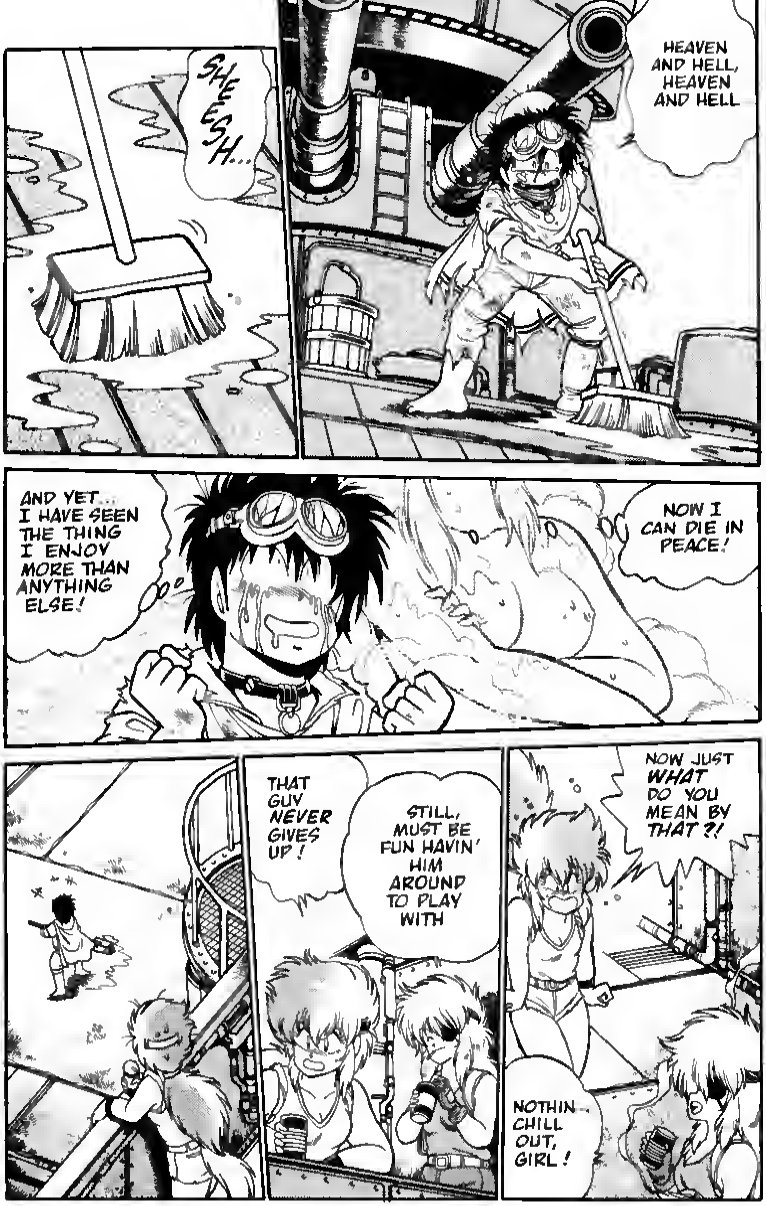
HEY, SORRY, GUYS, SORRY!
WHO'D EVER FIGURE YOU'D BE STOWED AWAY ON AN IMPERIAL SUPPLY SHIP?
BUT HELL, THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS THAT YOU'RE LOOKING GREAT!
WELL...
AND YOU, WATARU, YA LITTLE GOOFBALL! YOU AIN'T CHANGED A BIT!
GEE, THANKS
THIS TIME YOU'LL HANG OUT WITH US AWHILE, RIGHT?

FORGET HIM... TELL ME ABOUT THIS SHIP NOT PLAYING PIRATES, ARE YOU?
LATER, LATER FIRST THINGS FIRST
LET'S HIT THE SHOWERS AND FRESHEN UP
AND THEN WE HOIST A FEW TO OUR REUNION!
....
"SHOWER"..?!
SHSSS


....
KHADA... THOSE SCARS..
THESE ?
OH, THE IMPERIALS HAVE GOTTEN THEIR HANDS ON ME ONCE OR TWICE.
THEY PLAY KIND OF ROUGH, DON'T THEY?
YEAH, BUT HEY... WE'RE BLOOD ENEMIES, SEE, BOTH SIDES.
GUESS I HAVE TO EXPECT THAT SORT OF THING
IF THEY'RE YOUR ENEMIES, YOU MUST REALLY HATE THEM
THE IMPERIAL ARMY, SHION.
THE EMPRESS? NEVER SEEN THE LADY
FOR ME, IT'S NOT SOMETHING PERSONAL, SEE ?
HELL, FACT IS, IT'S NOT SUCH A BAD IDEA GETTING ALL THESE SHRIMP COUNTRIES TOGETHER INTO ONE BIG ONE
FOR ALL I KNOW, SHE'S BUILDING A GODDAMN UTOPIA

US? WE DON'T HAVE ANY IDEALS, OR MUCH OF A FUTURE
BUT THE EMPIRE COMES AND STUFFS THEIR CRAP DOWN OUR THROATS ANYWAY!
THEY THINK UTOPIA'S WORTH SACRIFICING A FEW "LOWLIFE BITCHES" ALONG THE WAY
NO WAY, MY FRIEND! WE DECIDE OUR FUTURE FOR OURSELVES!
HEH...
YOU'RE STILL PASSIONATE ABOUT SOMETHING NICE TO SEE...
NICE?
DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH. IN WARTIME, FRIEND OR FOE, EVERYONE'S A CRAZY FOOL.
SKEEK
HEY, WATARU!
EEP!
!!!
BE A GOOD BOY AND BRING ME A TOWEL.
ER... MEOW! MEOW!

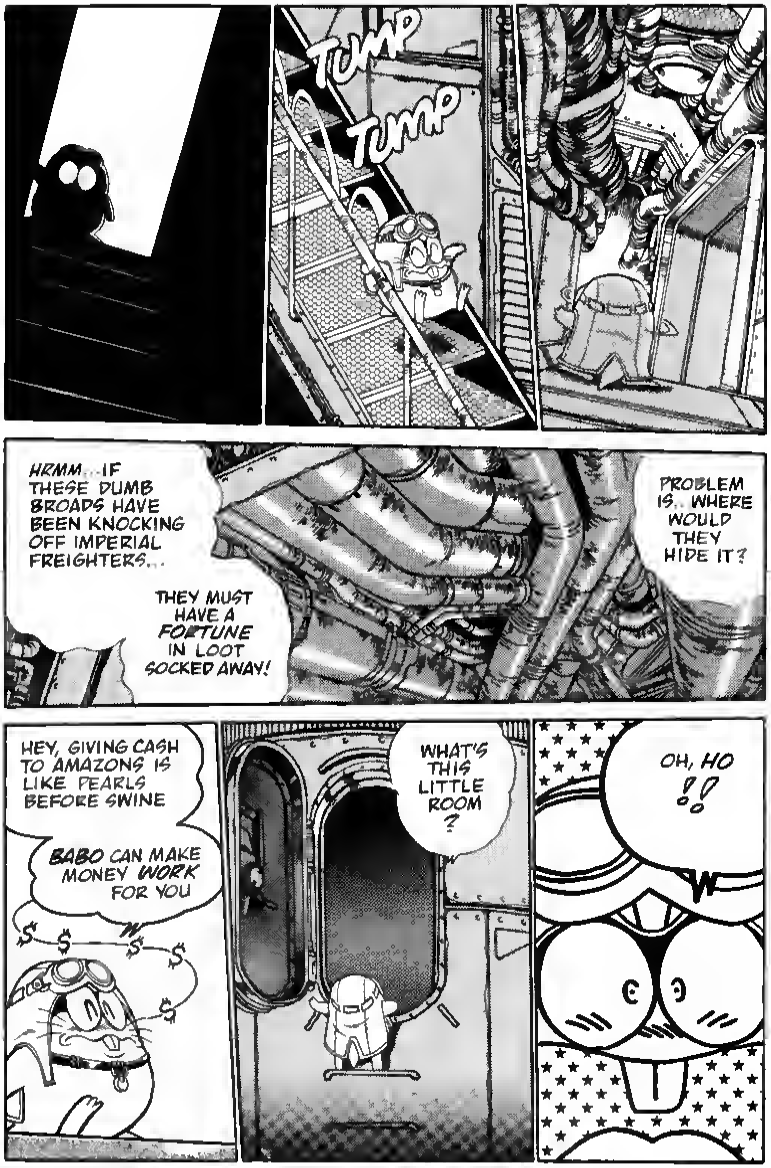

YOU'RE NOT FOOLING ANYONE, YOU CLOT!! HURRY UP!
YES, MA'AM! RIGHT AWAY, MA'AM!
HERE Y'ARE..
GREAT! YOU'RE A PAL!
WATARU, YOU LITTLE RAT!
Y-YOU GOT IT WRONG! I WAS PROTECTING YOU AGAINST PEEPING TOMS!
WHO'S GOING TO PEEP EXCEPT YOU?!
HNGG
WELL, HE'S A BOY, RIGHT? NO BIG SURPRISE
ANYWAY, NOW YOU HAVE SOME NICE MEMORIES TO TAKE TO HELL WITH YOU, EH, WATARU?!
KRIK KRAK

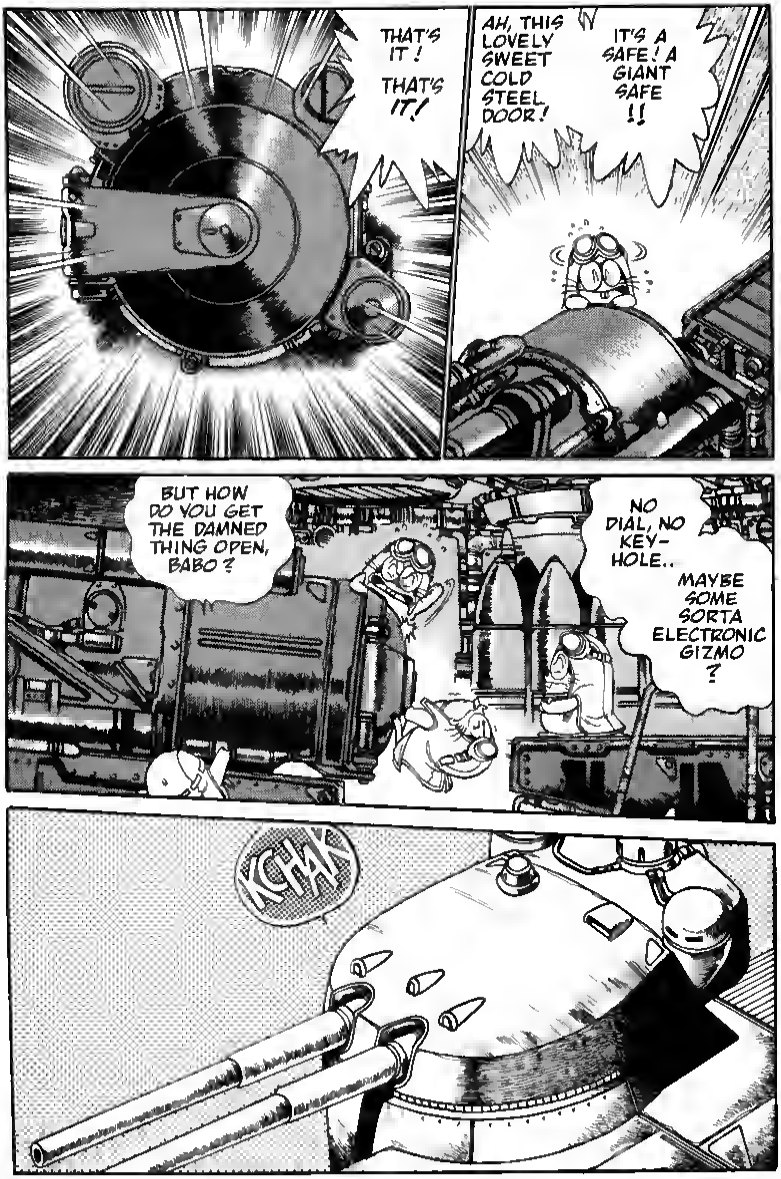

SHEESH...
HEAVEN AND HELL, HEAVEN AND HELL
AND YET... I HAVE SEEN THE THING I ENJOY MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE!
NOW I CAN DIE IN PEACE!
THAT GUY NEVER GIVES UP!
STILL, MUST BE FUN HAVIN' HIM AROUND TO PLAY WITH
NOW JUST WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?!
NOTHIN - CHILL OUT, GIRL!

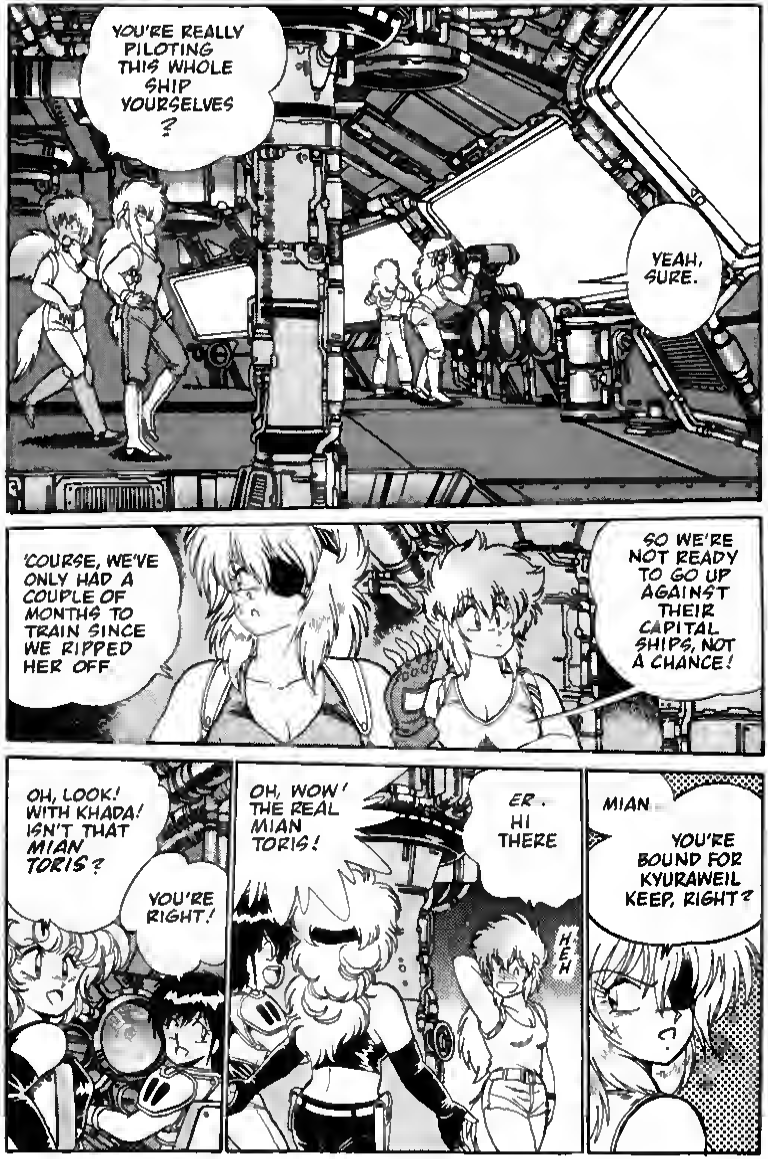
I WILL... IF YOU TELL ME HOW YOU GOT THIS SHIP. IT'S IMPERIAL, RIGHT?
STOLE IT!
YOU STOLE IT?!
CAUGHT UP WITH IT PATROLLING THE OCCUPIED ZONE, WENT THROUGH THE HULL WITH SHAPED CHARGES, SQUIRTED IN A SHOT OF SCOLEX GAS, AND ROTTED OUT THE SPINAL COLUMNS OF EVERY GUY ON BOARD.
EASIER THAN I THOUGHT, ACTUALLY
COOL! AND NOW YOU'RE THE PIRATE QUEEN, EH?
BUT YOU'RE DICING WITH DEATH WHEN YOU'RE IN IMPERIAL TERRITORY
IT'S DAMN DANGEROUS, AND IT'S NOT AS IF THERE'S A LOT OF PIZEY...
WE'RE NOT PIRATES, MIAN
WE'VE GOT OURSELVES A MISSION
A MISSION?
COME ON
LET'S TALK ON THE BRIDGE.

MAN...
I'M SUPPOSED TO SCRUB THIS WHOLE SHIP BY MYSELF?
PRETTY STEEP PRICE FOR ONE PEEK!
NOW, IF I'D ONLY GOTTEN A FEEL...
HOW ABOUT IT, LADIES! REAL BLACK LACE! SUPER SEXY!
POLKA DOTS! SEQUINS! BLUE, WHITE!
THAT LITTLE NUMBER'LL DO YOU FINE, DOLL
THESE ARE SO SWEET!
OOH!
CUTE!

I'LL TAKE THIS PAIR!
HEY, I SAW THEM FIRST!
I'D LIKE THESE, TOO!
DON'T PUSH, SWEETIES! THERE'S PLENTY FOR ALL!
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE DOING ALL RIGHT.
HEY, WATARU! FINALLY!
TAKE OVER FOR ME FOR A SEC
HEY! WHERE'RE YOU GOING?!
BACK SOON!
HAW, HAW! LOOKIT HIM BLUSH!
THE PEEPING TOM'S A VIRGIN!
WHAT! WHO TOLD YOU ABOUT THAT?!


TUMP
TUMP
HRMM...IF THESE DUMB BROADS HAVE BEEN KNOCKING OFF IMPERIAL FREIGHTERS...
THEY MUST HAVE A FORTUNE IN LOOT SOCKED AWAY!
PROBLEM IS... WHERE WOULD THEY HIDE IT?
HEY, GIVING CASH TO AMAZONS IS LIKE PEARLS BEFORE SWINE
BABO CAN MAKE MONEY WORK FOR YOU
$ $ $ $
WHAT'S THIS LITTLE ROOM?
OH, HO!!


THAT'S IT!
THAT'S IT!
AH, THIS LOVELY SWEET COLD STEEL DOOR!
IT'S A SAFE! A GIANT SAFE!!
BUT HOW DO YOU GET THE DAMNED THING OPEN, BABO?
NO DIAL, NO KEY-HOLE..
MAYBE SOME SORTA ELECTRONIC GIZMO?
KCHK

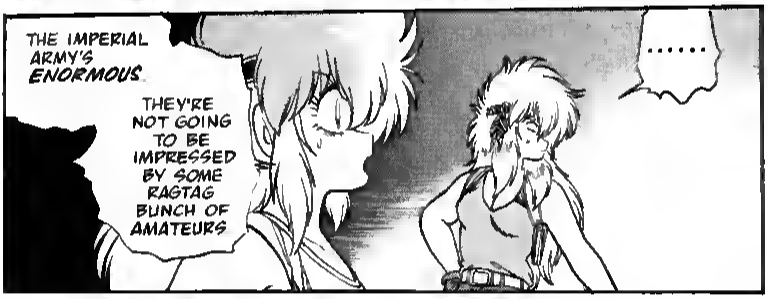

YOU'RE REALLY PILOTING THIS WHOLE SHIP YOURSELVES ?
YEAH, SURE.
'COURSE, WE'VE ONLY HAD A COUPLE OF MONTHS TO TRAIN SINCE WE RIPPED HER OFF
SO WE'RE NOT READY TO GO UP AGAINST THEIR CAPITAL SHIPS, NOT A CHANCE!
OH, LOOK! WITH KHADA! ISN'T THAT MIAN TORIS?
YOU'RE RIGHT!
OH, WOW! THE REAL MIAN TORIS!
ER. HI THERE
HEH
MIAN
YOU'RE BOUND FOR KYURAWEIL KEEP, RIGHT?

REALLY?! IN THAT CASE, WHY DON'T YOU TRAVEL WITH US?
WHAT? YOU MEAN YOU'RE--
YOU GOT IT. WE'RE BOUND FOR KYURAWEIL, TOO. WE'RE GONNA TAKE IT.
WHAT?! ARE YOU NUTS?! WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH ONE SHIP?!
THAT'S SUICIDE, AND YOU KNOW IT!
AND WHAT IF IT'S NOT ONE SHIP?
HUH..?
WHAT IF WE'RE NOT ALONE?!

"THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY"... ?!
ALL THE NATIONAL ARMIES DISBANDED BY HELGEBARD ALL THE MEN AND WOMEN IN THE RESISTANCE.
ALL OF US, EVERYONE WHO'S BEEN FIGHTING UNDERGROUND ALL THESE YEARS, WE'VE ALL COME TOGETHER-- ONE GIANT FIST OF STEEL!
I HAD NO IDEA THERE WERE SO MANY OF YOU
WELL, THAT'S NOT SURPRISING WE'VE HAD TO WORK IN TOTAL SECRECY
SO WHERE ARE THEY NOW?
TAKE A LOOK

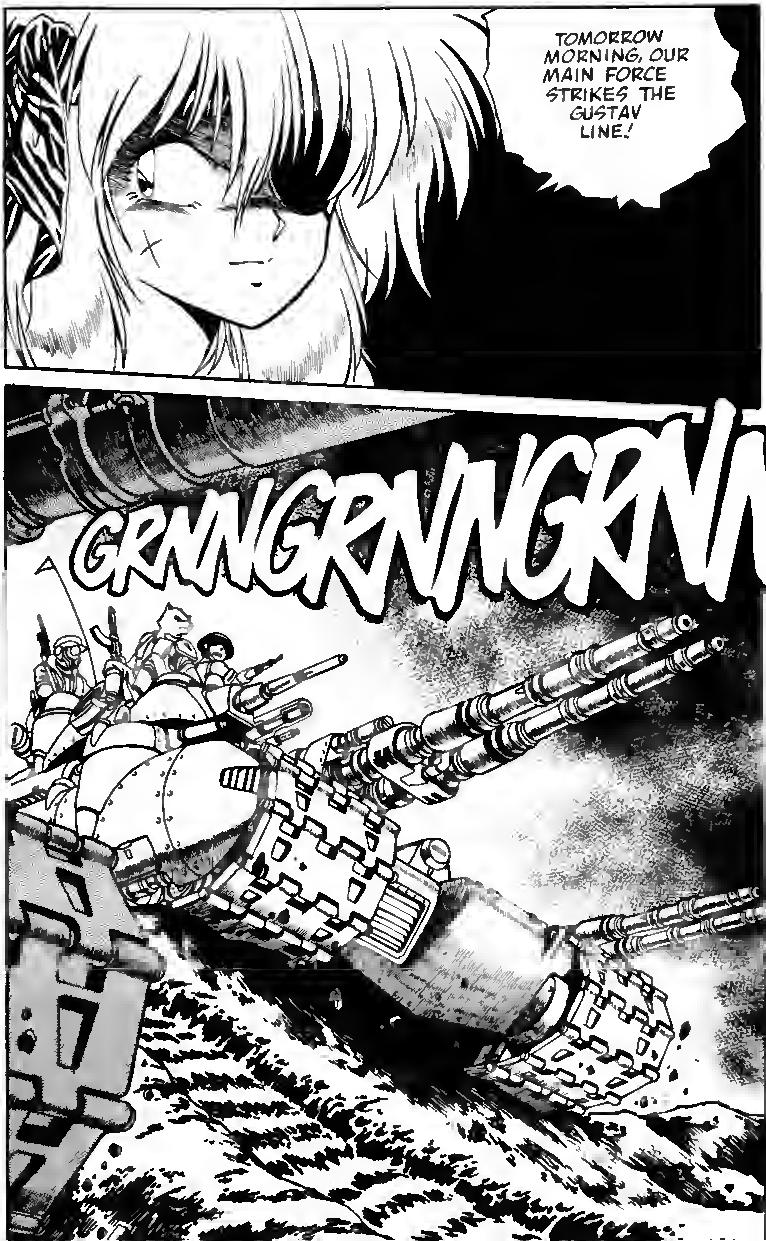
THIS IS THE GUSTAV LINE, THE EMPIRE'S BORDER FORTRESS
OUR MAIN FORCES ARE COMING TOGETHER HERE: 240 KILOMETERS SOUTH
BUT... BUT THAT MEANS YOU'RE ALL ALONE IN IMPERIAL TERRITORY!
CALM DOWN AND LISTEN, OKAY? IF WE HIT THE GUSTAV LINE, THE IMPERIALS'LL POUR IN REINFORCEMENTS
AND THAT'S WHERE WE COME IN! WE HIT THE SUPPLY LINES, RIP 'EM UP FROM BEHIND!
WITHOUT REINFORCEMENTS, THE GUSTAV LINE WON'T HOLD A DAY...WE'LL PUNCH THROUGH IT
AND AFTER THAT, IT'S ALL OVER
ONCE THE FIGHTING SPREADS, THE RESISTANCE INSIDE THE EMPIRE ITSELF WILL RISE UP
DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE IMPERIAL ARMY, KHADA.. OR EMPRESS SHION!

GRNNGRNNGRNN


THE IMPERIAL ARMY'S ENORMOUS
THEY'RE NOT GOING TO BE IMPRESSED BY SOME RAGTAG BUNCH OF AMATEURS
.....

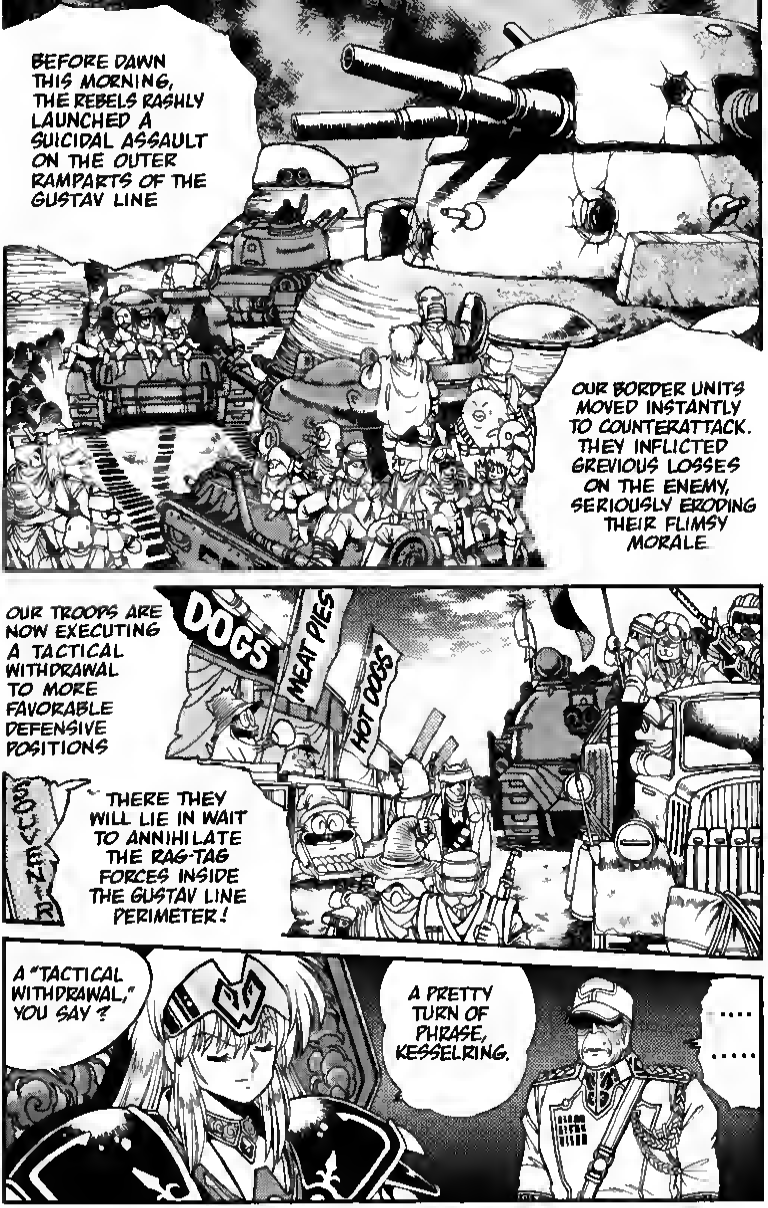
HELL, WE ALL KNOW THAT, MIAN
WE DON'T EXPECT TO BRING DOWN THE EMPIRE. ALL WE WANT IS ONE GOOD VICTORY.

AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT ?!
WHEN YOU'RE UP AGAINST A GIANT, ALL YOU CAN DO IS CHEW HIM UP FROM INSIDE LIKE BACTERIA
WE NEED ONE GOOD VICTORY TO SPREAD THAT BACTERIA
"TO SPREAD IT ALL OVER THE CONTINENT!"
IMPERIAL BORDER POST


TOMORROW MORNING, OUR MAIN FORCE STRIKES THE GUSTAV LINE!
GRINGRINGRIN

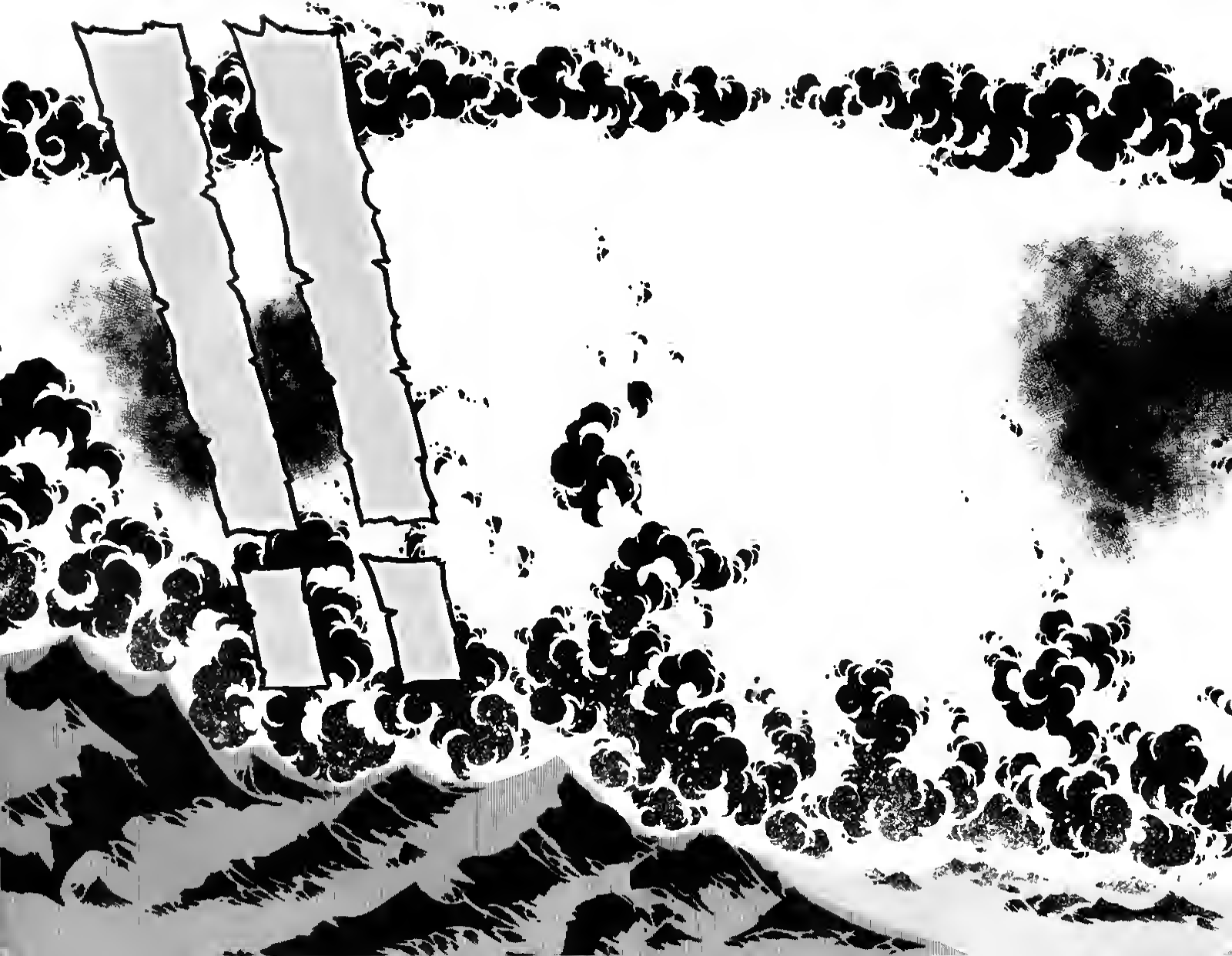
KRAK00M
STEEL STORM - TRIAL BY FIRE

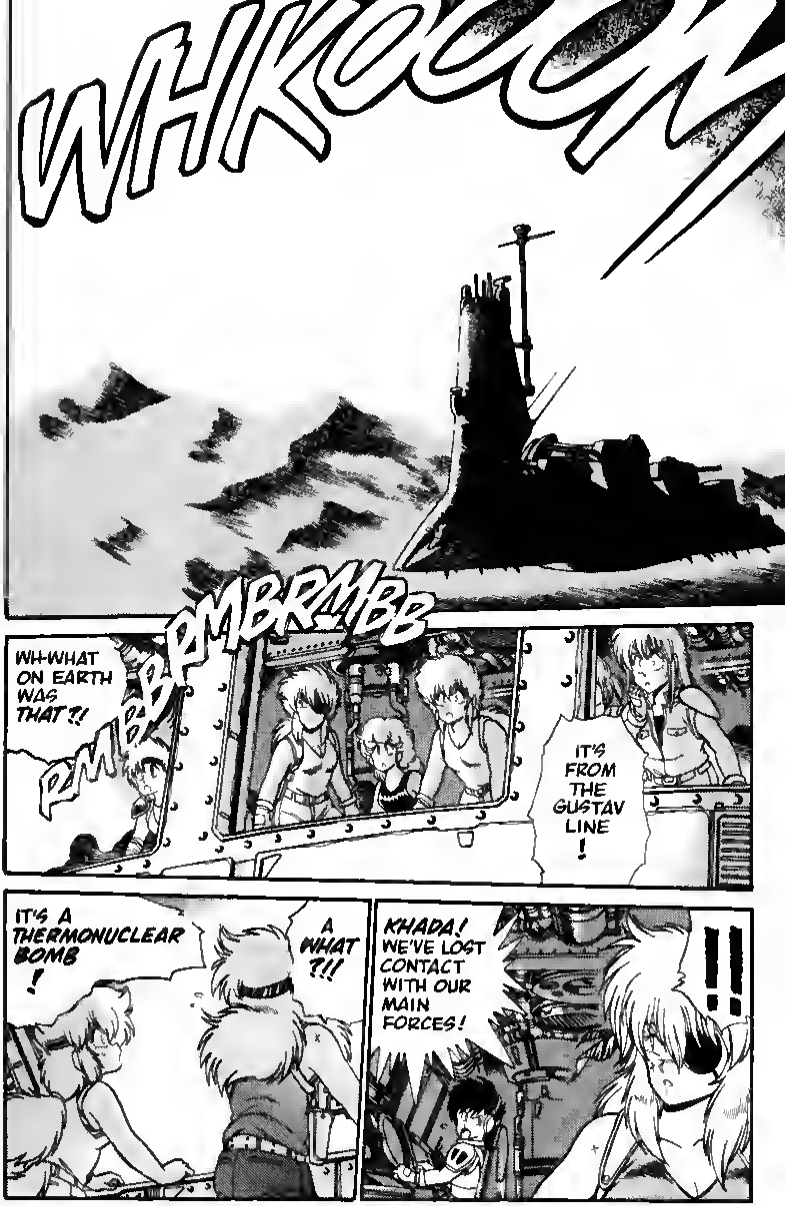
LET US BEGIN! KESSELRING ?!
YOUR HIGHNESS, ALLOW ME TO EXPLAIN THE PITIFUL STRUGGLES OF THIS ALLEGED "REBEL ARMY."
ON FEBRUARY 28TH OF THIS, THE FIRST YEAR OF THE SHION EPOCH, REBEL FORCES RAISED ARMS IN ALL OF OUR EMPIRE'S COLONIES.
THEIR CORE FORCE IS COMPOSED OF REMNANTS OF THE PEOPLE'S ARMIES OF EKODA AND NERIMA. ESTIMATED TROOP STRENGTH: TWENTY-FOUR THOUSAND! THEY'RE SUPPORTED BY ANOTHER 30,000 ARMED CIVILIANS


BEFORE DAWN THIS MORNING, THE REBELS RASHLY LAUNCHED A SUICIDAL ASSAULT ON THE OUTER RAMPARTS OF THE GUSTAV LINE
OUR BORDER UNITS MOVED INSTANTLY TO COUNTERATTACK. THEY INFLICTED GREVIOUS LOSSES ON THE ENEMY, SERIOUSLY ERODING THEIR FLIMSY MORALE.
OUR TROOPS ARE NOW EXECUTING A TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL TO MORE FAVORABLE DEFENSIVE POSITIONS
DOGS
MEAT PIES
HOT DOGS
SUPER
THERE THEY WILL LIE IN WAIT TO ANNIHILATE THE RAG-TAG FORCES INSIDE THE GUSTAV LINE PERIMETER!
A "TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL," YOU SAY?
A PRETTY TURN OF PHRASE, KESSELRING.
.....
.....

DO YOU THINK I'M DEAF AND BLIND ?!
YOUR HIGHNESS !
WE HAVE NO EXCUSE.
THE ENEMY APPEARS TO BE GAINING MOMENTUM, AND IS EVEN NOW ADVANCING THROUGH OUR FORTIFICATIONS
BUT FEAR NOT, YOUR MAJESTY !
GENERAL MANSTEIN, IS IT ?
YES, YOUR MAJESTY. EVEN AS WE SPEAK, THE TWENTY DIVISIONS OF THIRD ARMORED ARMY GROUP UNDER GENERAL LUNSCHTED ARE MOVING TO REINFORCE THE LINE
WE HAVE DEPLOYED FIFTY-FOUR HEAVY ARTILLERY REGIMENTS IN THE REBELS' PATH
GIVEN OUR OVERWHELMING FIREPOWER, IT SHOULD TAKE NO MORE THAN A DAY TO CRUSH THEM ONCE AND FOR ALL.
YOU FOOL
YOUR MAJESTY... ?
YOU STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND, DO YOU, MANSTEIN? OF COURSE THE OUTCOME IS CLEAR

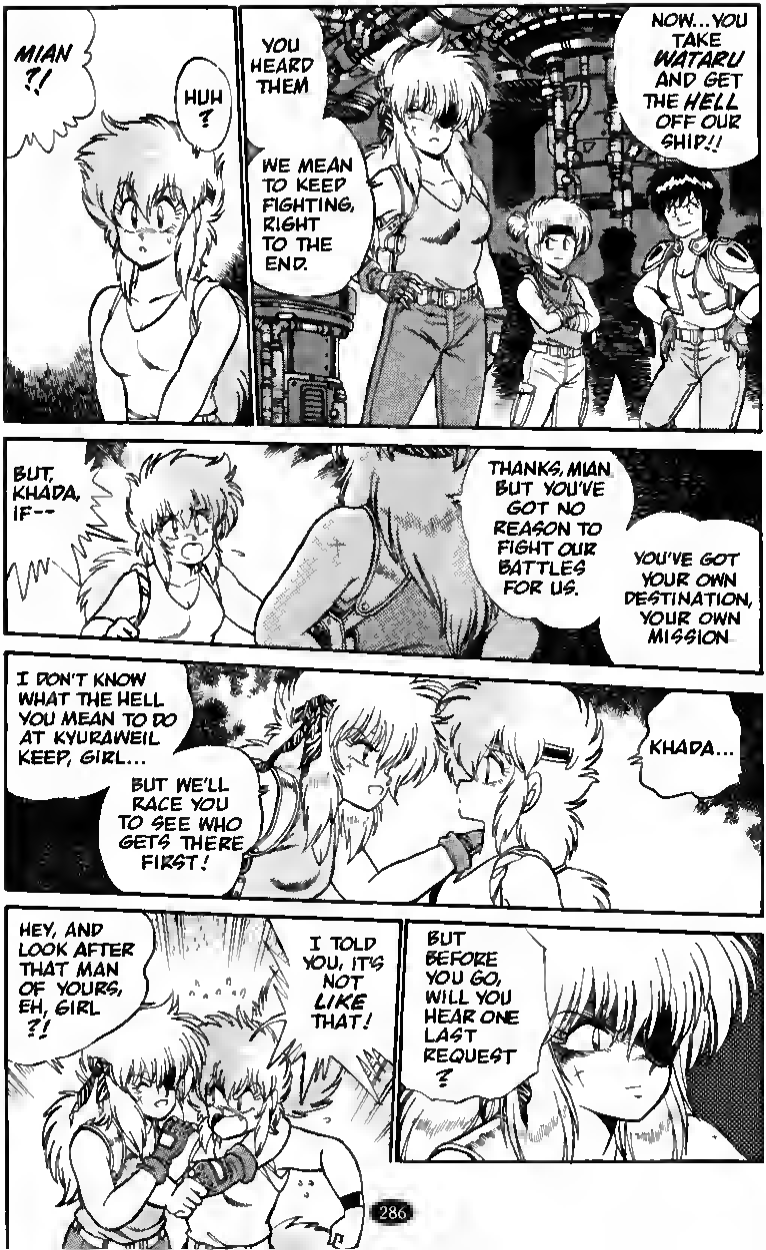
BUT OUR IMPERIAL ARMY CANNOT AFFORD TO BE SEEN COMMITTING MAJOR FORCES AGAINST A MERE REBEL UPRISING
IF ANYTHING SHOULD GO WRONG AND THE FIGHTING DRAG ON, IT WILL INVITE A SECOND REBELLION, A THIRD, MORE!!
THAT'S WHAT THE REBELS THEMSELVES ARE COUNTING ON.
THIS BATTLE IS A DEMONSTRATION! IT'S A POLITICAL DEMONSTRATION BY THOSE WHO OPPOSE THE THRONE.
AND THAT IS EXACTLY WHY WE MUST ACT BEFORE THEY GENERATE TOO MUCH PROPAGANDA.
WE MUST SHOW TO ONE AND ALL THE TRUE POWER OF THE EMPIRE!
THAT'S RIGHT-- ANNIHILATE THEM! WITH A SINGLE BLOW!

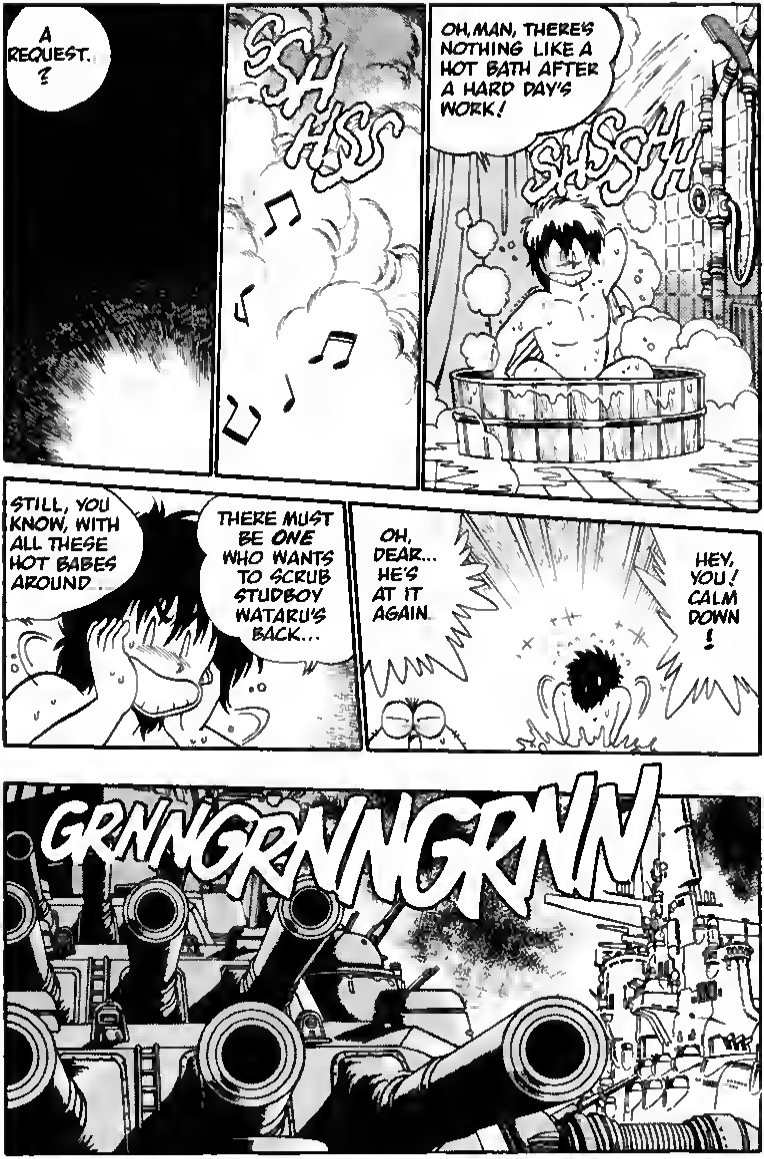



WHKOOOM
BPMBRMBB
WH-WHAT ON EARTH WAS THAT?!
IT'S FROM THE GUSTAV LINE!
IT'S A THERMONUCLEAR BOMB!
A WHAT?!!
KHADA! WE'VE LOST CONTACT WITH OUR MAIN FORCES!
!!

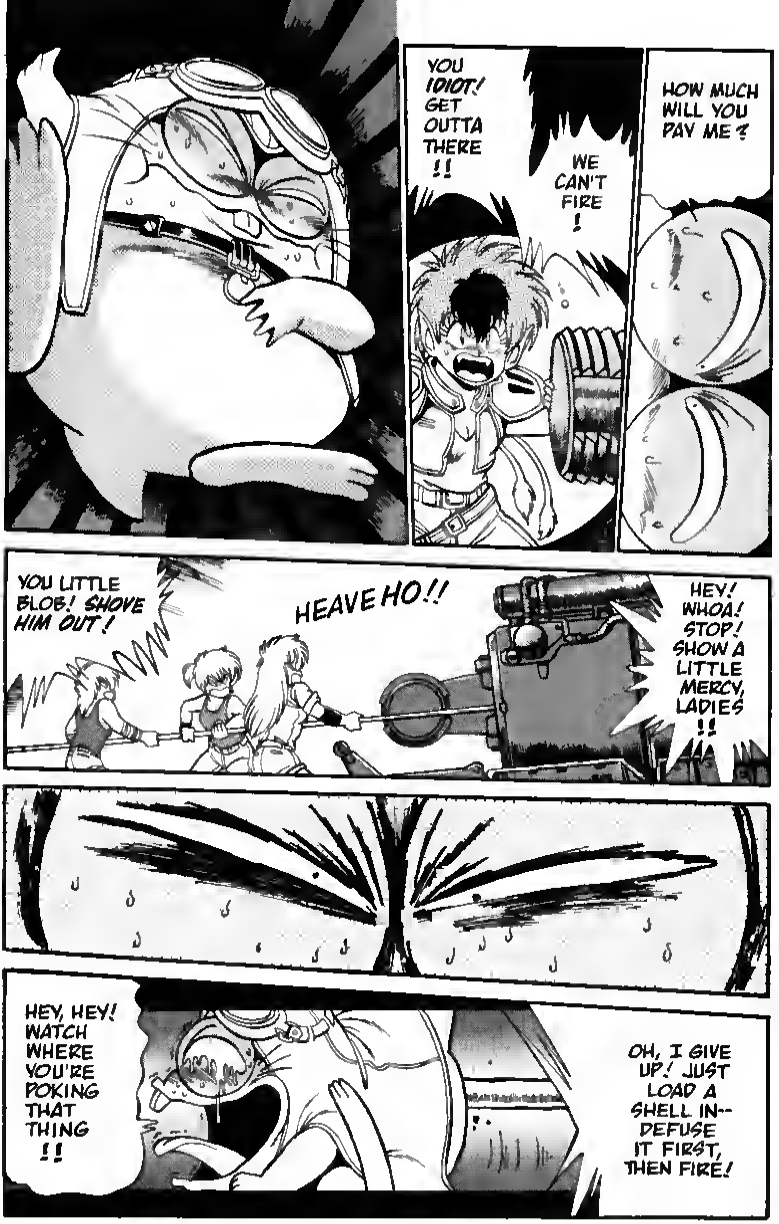
HQ, THIS IS GRIEF! COME IN, HQ! OVER!
THIS IS KHADA! CRUISER ELVERAS, COME IN! OVER!
CRUISER LAMIZ! COME IN, OVER!
ANSWER ME, ANYONE!
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...
ALL OF THEM.. GONE?!
SHIT, SHIT, SHIT!!
WHAK
IT CAN'T BE...IT CAN'T!!
SHION... YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS...
KHADA, WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
IT'S JUST US, NOW...

AS OF THIS INSTANT, WE HAVE BEEN CUT OFF, TRAPPED IN THE ENEMY'S GRASP.
WE MAY NOT GET OUT OF THIS ONE ALIVE.
WE HAVE ONLY TWO OPTIONS.
THE OTHER IS TO KEEP GOING AND SMASH OUR WAY INTO KYURAWEIL KEEP!!
ONE IS TO ABANDON THIS SHIP, AND SURRENDER TO THE EMPIRE.
LUNA ?!
YOU NEED TO ASK? KEEP FIGHTING !!
MARTINNE ?!
YOU THINK I'D PULL OUT NOW? LET'S DO IT !!
DAMN RIGHT! LET'S TAKE THEM OUT! WE'LL SHOW THEM WHAT WE'RE MADE OF!
NO WAY CAN WE LOSE TO THOSE IMPERIAL SLIME !


MIAN ?!
HUH ?
YOU HEARD THEM
WE MEAN TO KEEP FIGHTING, RIGHT TO THE END.
NOW... YOU TAKE WATARU AND GET THE HELL OFF OUR SHIP!!
BUT, KHADA, IF--
THANKS, MIAN. BUT YOU'VE GOT NO REASON TO FIGHT OUR BATTLES FOR US.
YOU'VE GOT YOUR OWN DESTINATION, YOUR OWN MISSION
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL YOU MEAN TO DO AT KYURAWEIL KEEP, GIRL...
BUT WE'LL RACE YOU TO SEE WHO GETS THERE FIRST!
KHADA...
HEY, AND LOOK AFTER THAT MAN OF YOURS, EH, GIRL ?!
I TOLD YOU, IT'S NOT LIKE THAT!
BUT BEFORE YOU GO, WILL YOU HEAR ONE LAST REQUEST ?

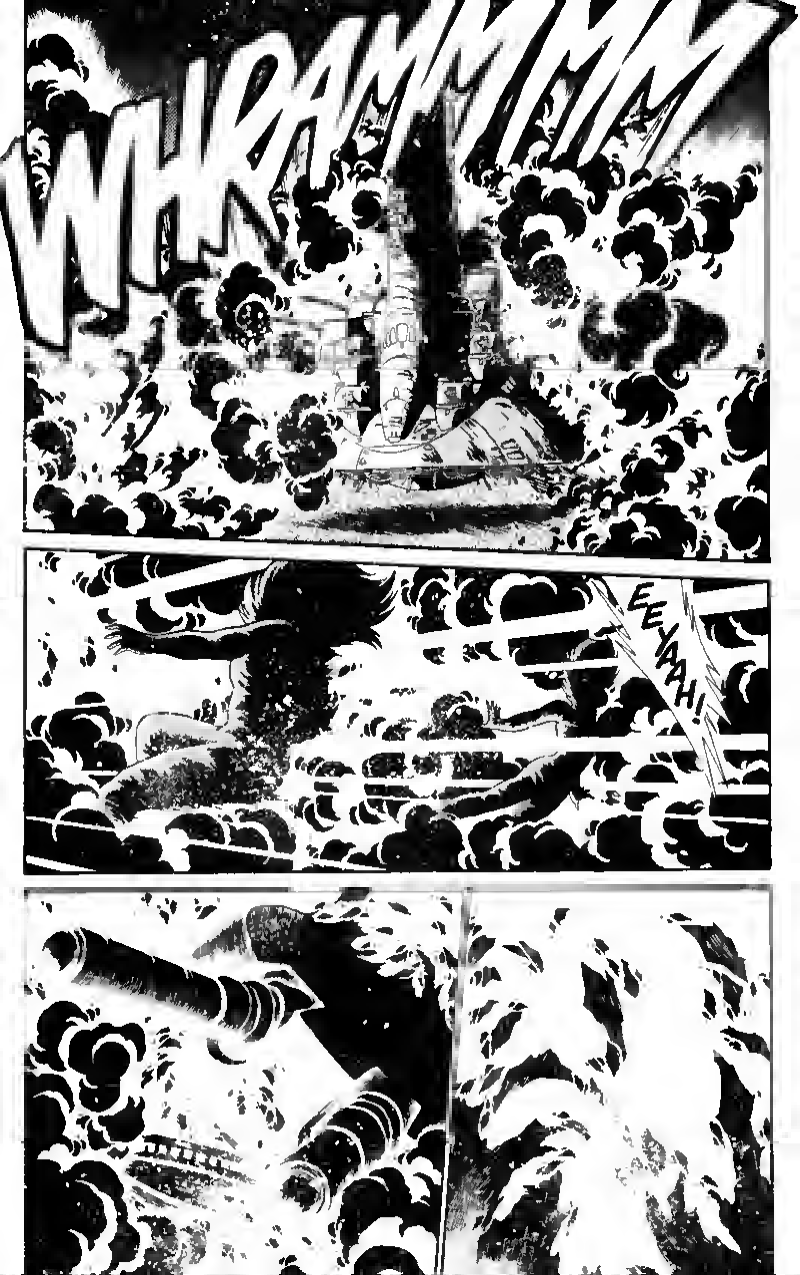

A REQUEST. ?
SH HSS
OH, MAN, THERE'S NOTHING LIKE A HOT BATH AFTER A HARD DAY'S WORK!
SHSSH
STILL, YOU KNOW, WITH ALL THESE HOT BABES AROUND.
THERE MUST BE ONE WHO WANTS TO SCRUB STUDBOY WATARU'S BACK...
OH, DEAR... HE'S AT IT AGAIN.
HEY, YOU! CALM DOWN!
GRNNGRNNGRNN

GUN
TURRET 4 READY TO FIRE!
STARBOARD MAGAZINE FEED, UP AND READY!
ALL STARBOARD GUNS, READY TO FIRE!
ENGINE ROOM NORMAL! SPEED, FORTY-TWO KNOTS!
TURRET C! WHAT'S GOING ON DOWN THERE?!
KHADA, THERE'S SOMETHING GROSS STUCK IN THE BARREL!
WHAT?!


YOU IDIOT! GET OUTTA THERE !!
WE CAN'T FIRE !
HOW MUCH WILL YOU PAY ME?
YOU LITTLE BLOB! SHOVE HIM OUT!
HEAVE HO!!
HEY! WHOA! STOP! SHOW A LITTLE MERCY, LADIES !!
HEY, HEY! WATCH WHERE YOU'RE POKING THAT THING !!
OH, I GIVE UP! JUST LOAD A SHELL IN-- DEFUSE IT FIRST, THEN FIRE!

PORT GUNS, 80 DEGREES, ELEVATION 32 DEGREES, RANGE 2.5 MILES!
ALL GUNS, READY TO FIRE!
WE'LL TAKE OUT THEIR LEAD SHIP!
ENGINE ROOM, ALL AHEAD ONE HALF. RUDDER, COME TO PORT FIVE DEGREES!
EASY, EASY, BABY..
FIRE!!
WRAM!

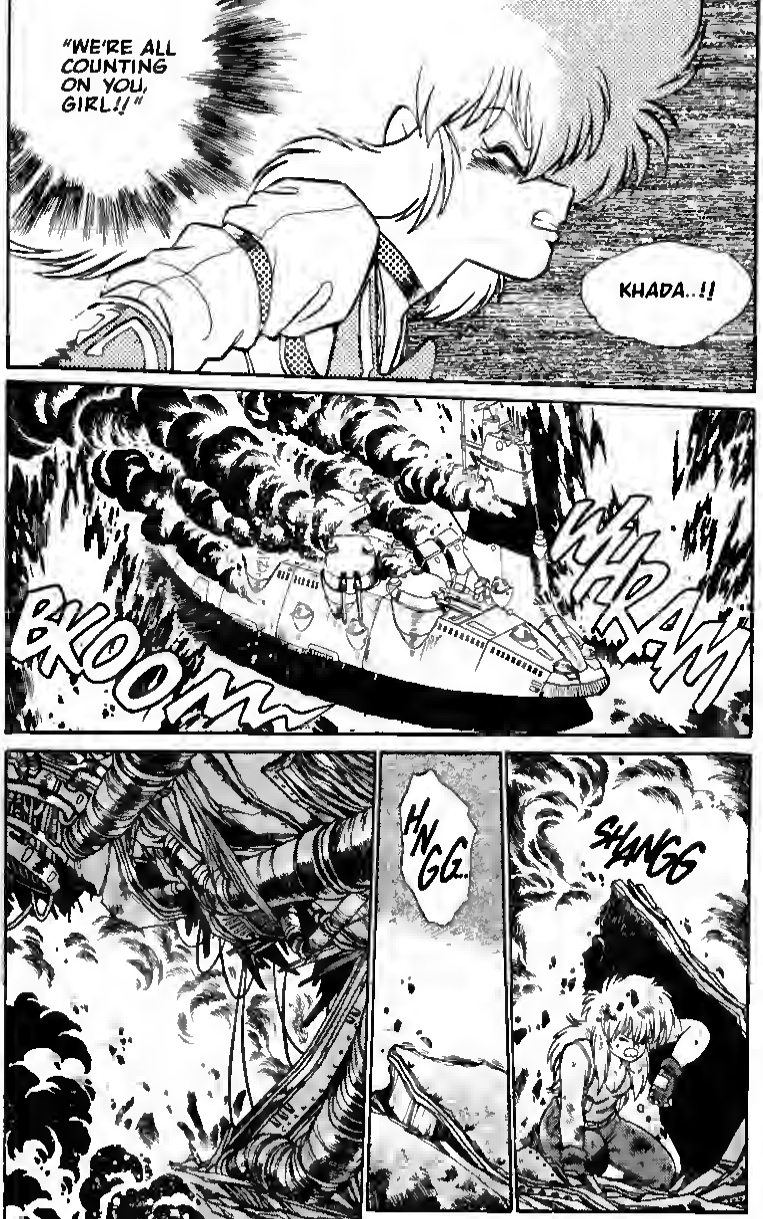
WHBKOOOM
WHRAMM
DEAD ON, GIRLS! ALL GUNS, LOCK ON THEIR SECOND SHIP!
BKBOOM
SKRASHOOM


WHAMMM
EEYAH!

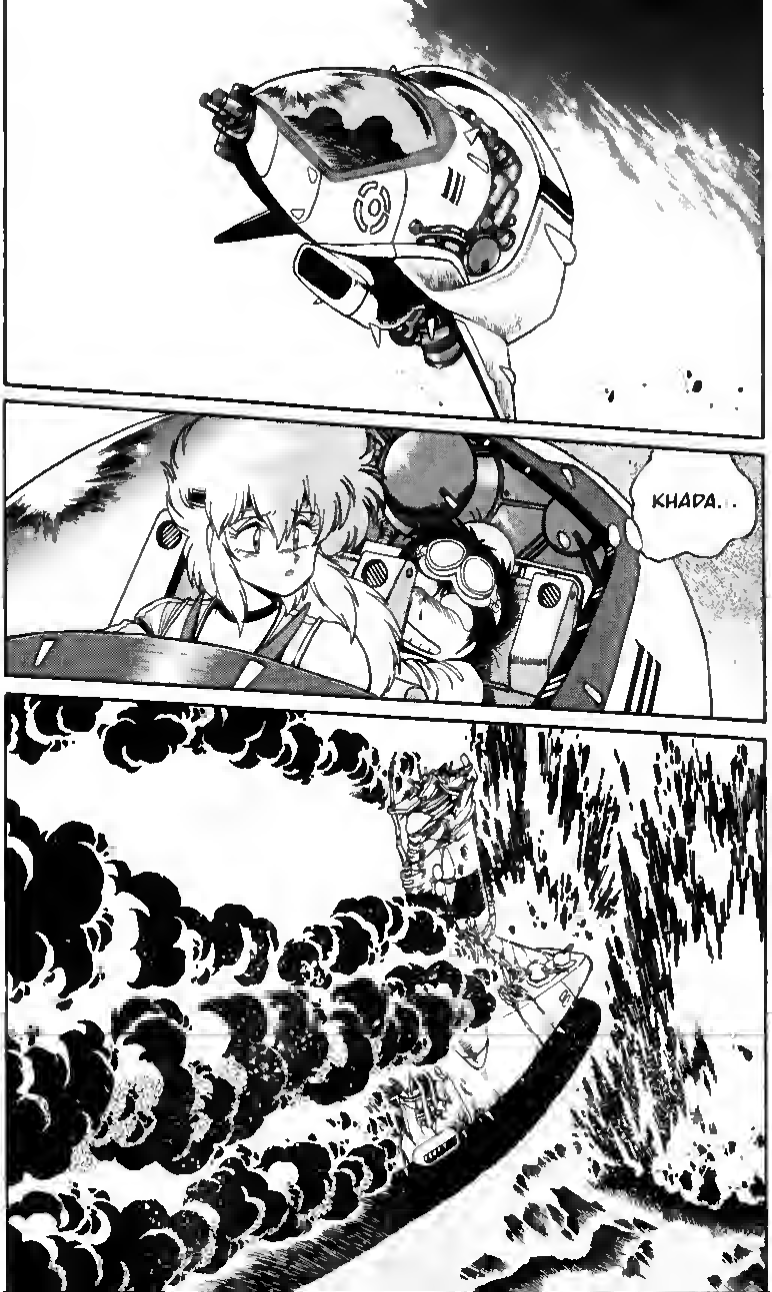
WATARU!!
WATARU, WHERE ARE YOU?!
ANSWER ME!!
MI-AAAN..
WATARU!
WHA-?
YOU LITTLE FLASHER! YOU THINK I WANT TOO SEE THAT?!
OOPS...

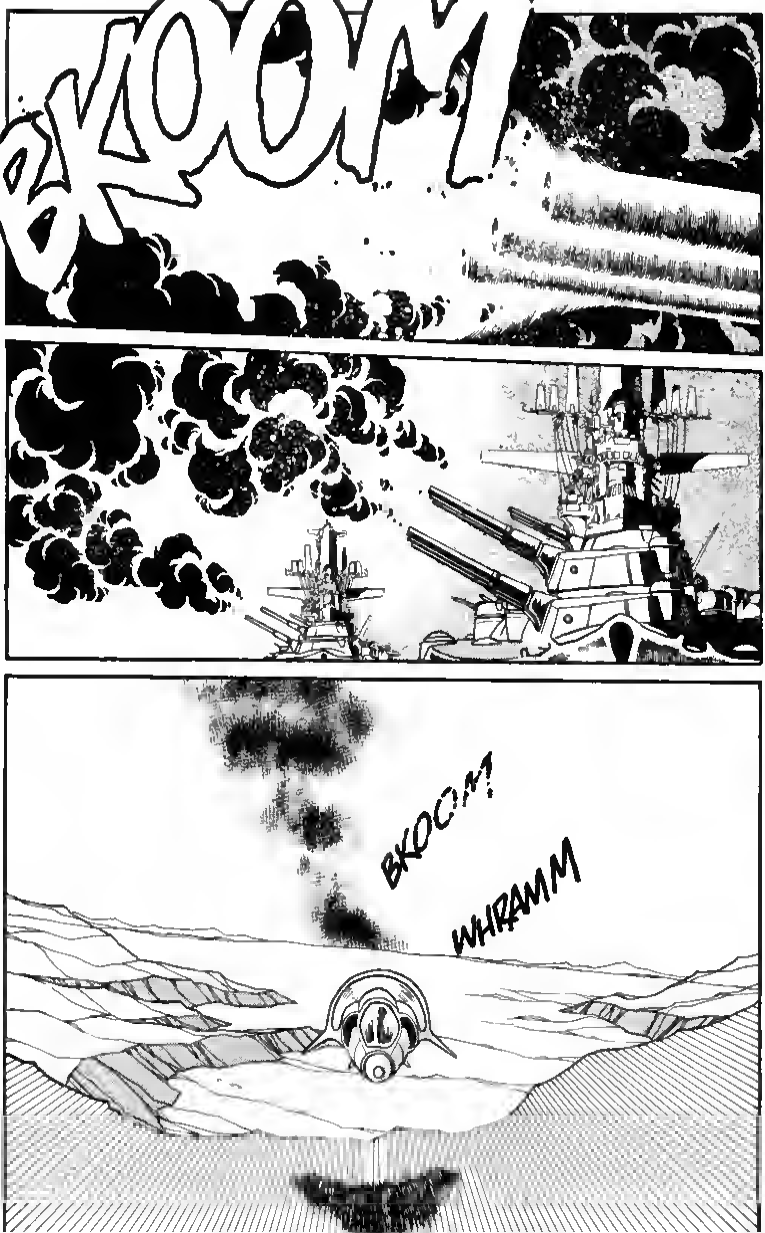
HEY. IT'S NOT MY FAULT! I WAS TAKING A BATH, REMEMBER?!
SHUT UP, YOU PERVERT! PUT YOUR PANTS ON AND FOLLOW ME!
FOLLOW YOU? WHERE?!
THERE'S AN ESCAPE CAPSULE ON THE BOTTOM DECK!!
ESCAPE...?
THEN, WHAT ABOUT KHADA AND HER PALS?
.....
THEY'RE STAYING
JUST WAIT ONE MINUTE! WE'RE GOING TO SNEAK OFF OUT THE BACK DOOR?!
THERE'S NO CHOICE! HURRY!
HEY! I KNOW YOU'RE ONE COLD BITCH, MIAN, BUT THIS IS TOO MUCH!!
I REFUSE TO—
KRAK
SORRY, WATARU.
THERE'S NO TIME TO EXPLAIN.

A SYMBOL?
YOU HEARD ME. THE LIBERATION ARMY NEEDS SOMEONE LIKE YOU...
...AS A SYMBOL OF REBELLION!
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING! ME?!
YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT?!
HEY, I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO FIGHT FOR US.
I'M SAYING THAT JUST BY BEING OUT THERE YOU GIVE US COURAGE!
THE MOST WANTED CRIMINAL IN THE EMPIRE HEADING STRAIGHT FOR KYURAWEIL KEEP. EVERYONE'S ROOTING FOR YOU.
NEVER SAW IT THAT WAY...
HEY, IT'S PROBABLY A PAIN IN THE ASS, FAR AS YOU'RE CONCERNED.
BUT WE'VE COME THIS FAR. I DON'T WANT THIS BATTLE TO STAMP OUT THE FIRES OF REVOLUTION!

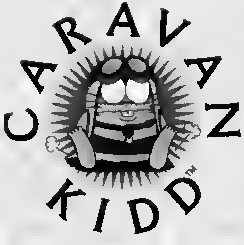

"WE'RE ALL COUNTING ON YOU, GIRL!!"
KHADA..!!
BKOOM
WHAM
HNGG..
SHANGG

.....
.....
WHOOSH
MIAN...
!
WE.. WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU...

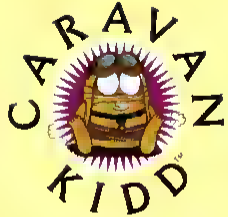

KHADA...


BKOOM!
BKOOM!
WHAMM

DAMMIT, MIAN !!
I DON'T CARE WHAT THE REASONS WERE! YOU TURNED YOUR BACK ON KHADA AND HER FRIENDS! YOU ABANDONED THEM!
GOD-DAMN IT, ARE YOU LISTENING?! SAY SOMETHING!!
SHIT. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE SUCH A LOUSY, COLD-HEARTED--
YOU SHUT UP !!
WHAK
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT I'M THINKING?! HOW I FEEL?!
KRAK
WHUD
WHOK
OWW, OWW, OWW !!
THAT NIGHT MIAN CRIED FOR HOURS...
IT...IT WAS A MIAN I'D NEVER SEEN BEFORE...


CARAVAN
KIDD

キャラバン・キッド



Having escaped the Empress Shion, Mian and Wataru take time out from their travels to enjoy some music at a local tavern. The minions of the Helgebard Empire have other plans, though, as Mian is forced to defend a local singer from their harassment. The threat of troops and tanks is small compared to the spectacle of Mian's ..uh . exceptional singing voice!

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